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[AN IMPASSIONED WOOER.]

LURED AND LOST.

CHAPTER VIII.

When hopes are blighted,
Hearts disunited,
Wrongs left unrighted,
Hope fled for aye;
All we discerning,
To sadness turning,
For quiet yearning,
Hate we the day.

A FORTNIGHT has passed away. The burdock leaves are taller than before, the rose-bush is more mouldy, the moss green and rich and spongier than ever.

Yet, despite the noxious evening zephyrs from the marshy stream, the clammy chambers, the undesirable fare, and the unlovely host and hostess, here we still discover Miss Trevanion enjoying herself; also Mr. Gerald Traverser suffering untold agonies of nervousness and love.

And why?

Don't ask St. Cloud. She is as much amazed as you are.

She wanted to go the day after her adorer's arrival, but occasioned such tragic remarks on his part for ever having been born that her soft heart relented, and she forbore.

She wanted to go two days after that, when Aunt Becky offended her by some piece of familiarity, but every soul present rose up with such a wall of benevolence that again she refrained.

Then Cousin Corny got a note from Carrington Roselle, giving his consent to his sister-in-law's remaining for a few weeks longer with her aunt, and she could not in decency run off immediately after that.

And of course Gerald Traverser stayed on from day to day, mooning over her, and of course she couldn't rld him off until he gave her the chance.

To tell the truth, she does not dislike Gerald Traverser half so much as she dislikes Miss Bayne and Mr. Crimble; she would infinitely prefer his society to theirs undiluted, as long as he is not left alone with her; and at the mere thought of his leaving her to the sole company of the skeletons she shudders.

She is continually puzzling her head trying to guess their motive in beguiling her into their rat-infested hotel, and for the last few days she has conceived the horrible suspicion that Cousin Corny has set the eye of affection upon her.

He is vulgarly offensive to Mr. Gerald, and odiously so to her.

She flies with abhorrence from any chance of a private interview with him. She thinks it is an illustration of the old puzzle about the man, the wolf the fox, and the goose crossing the river; only that in her case there are two vultures and a fox for the poor goose to grapple with. There's no safety but in keeping all together.

Miss Trevanion is tired of watching Aunt Becky's tresses pass through their diurnal transformations. In the morning jetty ringlets adorn her rare, pale face; at noon they are empurpled as the locks of a houri; at evening-tide they seem mysteriously green; at midnight—so tradition hath it—they are white as her own cheese.

Miss Trevanion has made up her mind to go to-day if her ingratitude should crush all the inmates and bereave Gerald of his senses.

For this fell purpose after the matin feast is over she clears her throat, and after due trepidation says:

"Aunt Rebecca, I am thinking of going back to Bertha to-day."

"To-day?" cries that lady, her benign countenance falling.

Mr. Gerald springs up as if stung, and darts into the passage for his hat. He always does that when his heart is torn and lacerated by St. Cloud's ingratitude.

"I really must go, aunt," says she, in the meek, small voice of guilt. "I have stayed quite a long while, and I am afraid I must—" becoming incoherent

as she notes through the half open door the miserable workings of young Traverser's face, while he drags on his boots.

"Wanting to run away from us, sweetie?" unctuously twangs Cousin Corny, and he bends over the back of her chair until his long nose is almost digging up the curls on the top of her pretty head. "Don't move, cousin!"—she has bounced away some two feet, but finds a talon holding her down—"you're never in my way, and well you know it. Now, what's this about going away?"

"If I could be driven over to the railway station this morning," a distance of twenty-five miles; "for I really must get back to my sister," humbly falters the culprit.

"I see what it is," hisses Cousin Corny in her ear; "it's that young man who is driving you away from us! He is persecuting you! He shall march out of this immediately."

His words had due effect.

"Oh, no—no—don't speak to him, please!" gasps St. Cloud, shocked; "he must not be insulted on my account. He has nothing to do with my going. I like—yes, I like him very much,"—delighted at the opportunity of snubbing Cousin Corny—"and would not stay if you did send him away. Fact is, I must go."

"How do you intend to go, Cousin St. Cloud?"—very sourly.

"Couldn't I hire a horse and some sort of a conveyance in the village?"

"I think not. This is market day, and there's not a horse in the village."

Miss Trevanion wrings her hands in petulant impatience.

"You have no right to keep me here against my will!" she cries, indignantly, "and if I can't go to-day, I will to-morrow."

As she speaks she feels that an inscrutable look has passed between her relatives, and an uneasy apprehension fills her heart at once.

Aunt Becky's pale eyes shine glassily and her thin lips tremble as she says, firmly:

"Whenever Trevanion feels her aunt's hospitality a constraint it is time for her to go. Cornelius, you will drive your cousin to the station as early to-morrow morning as you can procure a horse."

"Aunt Rebecca, don't be angry," falters St. Cloud, with compunction. "I'm sure I'm ever so much obliged for all your kindness to me, and I wouldn't go away if I didn't feel it best that I should do so. And, Cousin Cornelius, pray don't trouble yourself driving me to the station, indeed I would much prefer getting a boy from the hotel to do it, it's too much to expect of you—I would much rather not"—floundering deeper and deeper into disgrace as she encountered Aunt Becky's frosty stare.

The front door opens and shuts, Mr. Gerald staggers down to the gate and hangs over it with his head between his hands.

"Have I been so unfortunate as to fall in my honest efforts to please?" inquires Mr. Crimble, in a voice as hard as iron.

"And is it possible that you would prefer the society of a hireling to that of your own kin, bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh?"

St. Cloud quails as this leathery addition to her corporation comes round in front of her.

"Because," resumes Cousin Corny, with rising wrath, "if such is the case I know whom to blame for it. Yonder slouches the scoundrel!"—he points at Mr. Gerald—"who has taught you to mock at the affection of your aunt and cousin. There's the sneering, rapid idiot who has alienated your love from your true-hearted, if homely relatives. Out of respect to you, Miss Trevanion, and to your father's house, we took him into our home of happiness, and gave him food to eat and raiment to put on—or at least provender for his horse; and this is his return! He goes to-day."

"You are quite mistaken, indeed you are!" screams St. Cloud, but she cannot stay the avenger, for he has slammed the door behind him and gone forth to annihilate the victim who hangs over the gate.

"What a shame!" sobs St. Cloud, stamping her foot. "Mr. Travers never said a word about any one here, good, bad or indifferent. Aunt Rebecca, can't you call him back and not let him insult Mr. Travers so unjustly?"

Aunt Becky dreadingly wipes her eyes and doesn't move.

"Then if you won't I will!" flashes St. Cloud; "he'll get heart-ache enough from me without being abused by Cousin Cornelius."

And she makes a dart for the door.

Aunt Becky puts forth a bony hand and as she passes draws her to her yearning bosom.

"Oh, if my sainted Hattie could only look down and see how you are treating your poor Aunt Rebecca!" wails she, and weeps.

The discomfited peacemaker is fain to hush the stormy cries of woe and make it up with a smoke-dried kiss. But not even Aunt Becky's tears can entrap her into saying she'll stay.

By the time the affectionate outburst is over the avenger and his victim have vanished.

St. Cloud wonders whether they have retired to the stable-yard to fight a duel, or whether Mr. Gerald has fled to a lonely place to destroy himself, while Mr. Crimble has gone to hire a carriage for her.

She goes up to her dingy chamber and resolutely packs up her trunks.

She feels very despicable over the treatment which Mr. Gerald has received on her account, and wonders how she will ever be able to tell him that all his sufferings have been in vain.

She goes downstairs at dinner time and perceives her two adorers marshalling side by side along the river bank.

They each look like a chief mourner at a funeral, only that Cousin Corny's face is like a burlesque and Mr. Gerald's like a tragedy.

They enter the cot and seat themselves around the noon love-feast of fat bacon and cabbage, with rushing calmness.

St. Cloud had meditated an ardent deprecation of the late transactions, but the universal starchy glances her lips together.

She gulps her loathsome viands in shuddering silence.

The love-feast wanes into the past.

St. Cloud looks at Mr. Gerald to see what his looks portend.

His looks portend that he is in a Gehenna of misery, and that he would have speech of her.

The two vultures are crouching in sepulchral amity over the fragments, so she whispers:

"Come out to the garden," and flits into the passage for her hat and scarf.

She hears Cousin Corny say, in the most vulgarly offensive tone:

"Young man, go now," and Mr. Gerald rushes out looking as if he were going to be hanged.

"Where are you to go?" queries Miss Trevanion,

picking her way with uplifted skirts among the toad-stools of the enchanting enclosure.

"I am to go away," replies he, breathlessly. "Mr. Crimble has ordered me off. Miss Trevanion, I wish to Heaven I had never come here!"

"You have been treated shamefully!" cries she, with beautiful cheeks on fire, "and I can never loathe myself enough for permitting you to stay where you would be insulted—especially when I can't reward your devotion," she falters, bravely.

"Don't say that!" gasps the young man. "You'll madden me if you say that!"

Her heart sinks—why did she not tell him at first that she did not intend to marry him? The news will kill him now.

"I—I must say what I mean," she mutters through chattering teeth, "and you must try to listen bravely."

"Not here then—not here!" almost groans Mr. Gerald; "not with those people's eyes fastened on us. Come, Miss Trevanion, and let me hear my doom in some lonely spot!"

"Where else can we go?" queried she, reluctant.

"Anywhere out of their sight," he whispers, feverishly.

She throws a defiant glance at the window where two vulture backs are showing, and makes up her mind.

"Come along, then. We'll take a walk by the river," says she, and together they step upon the slippery ground.

There have been three days of rain, and the river bank is muddier than ever. The river is so swollen by the freshet that it almost brims over its shiny banks, and the eel-speakers have lost their occupation.

What a comfort to the habitants of Broome Village, if they are as tired of eels as she is.

As for her she will leave Broome village and its commissariat behind to-morrow, so for her the deliverance comes too late.

Mr. Gerald ploughs through the mud as fast as the impediment of its ten inches of depth will let him, and she is in constant danger of being left in the rear. Fagged, and a prey to exhaustion, she at length halts, calling out:

"Mr. Travers, pray do not go any farther."

Her adorer wheels round and points tragically to the cot.

"See," he utters, in high excitement. "We are pursued. Come, Miss Trevanion, come!"

St. Cloud assures herself that Cousin Corny is at the gate, evidently meditating a descent upon them, and filled with righteous ire she instantly accepts the arm which Mr. Gerald has proffered and heroically plunges onward by his side.

"There is a boat somewhere near here," observes her adorer, panting with haste; "I saw it yesterday, and thought of offering you a sail. Would you mind going aboard and drifting down the river for a mile or two?"

"By all means let us get into the boat; I suppose he won't swim after us," says St. Cloud, animated solely by a perverse hope of defeating Cousin Corny and in a few minutes they have reached a boat-house, run out a light skiff with oars in it, and are slipping down the stream between the red ochre banks like any other pair of lovers.

They retrace the path they have walked; pass the cot at the gate of which Cousin Corny watches them; pass the ugly village houses, the covered bridge, the blackening fen-lands; leave all behind and enter fairer scenes.

The noble woods close round them, the flowers enamel the river's brink, water lilies rock on the playful eddies; then the stream widens, parts in two swirling currents and fairly lies before them.

CHAPTER IX.

Not a word is exchanged by the pair as Gerald Travers steers the skiff with his oar over the shoal to the islet, and secures it to a tree.

Somewhat startled, St. Cloud obediently steps out upon the shingle and paces by his side under the luxuriant maples and beeches.

A small frown is gathering on her dainty brow; she had not expected to be present at such a very private interview with the man she was prepared to reject. She is amazed at the turn affairs have taken, for she never gave Mr. Gerald credit for so much audacity as this comes to.

She takes a decided stand under a feathery cedar, and fans her crimson cheeks in grim silence.

"Now I have you all to myself!" exclaims the adorer with unnatural exultation, "and can hear your sweet voice without interruption as long I choose. My queen my star!"—with a passionate fervour—"this

happiness was well worth all I have endured to obtain it!"

"Mr. Travers, I object to your manner of addressing me, she says; "whatever you have to say to me must be calmly and quietly spoken."

"I can't speak it calmly—I can't," cries he, seizing her hands and almost crushing them in his small, convulsive ones; "it's about my love, my worship, my mad worship of you, St. Cloud! how can you expect me to talk about it without agitation? It's the passion of my life, the ruling power. I would go through fire and water to obtain you, St. Cloud!"

"Sir, you must leave my hands alone and moderate your excitement," she retorts, withdrawing herself from his vehement clutch with flashing eyes, "or I shall regret having put myself under your protection, and ask you to set me on shore."

"Pardon me—pardon me—if you can!" said Mr. Gerald, utterly overwhelmed by her displeasure, and he flings himself face downward on the leafy ground and weeps.

It promises to be uphill work to dismiss her lover, but St. Cloud tells herself that at all risks she must do it now.

"Mr. Travers," she says, firmly, "I would have liked to tell you before, but you never gave me an opportunity until now, that I don't think we would suit each other at all, and so we might as well say good-by."

Mr. Travers lifted a face as wild and wretched as that of a lost spirit, and sighs, chokingly:

"I know I am utterly vile and contemptible, and that I might as well expect an angel from Heaven to stoop to me as you!"

"Hush! hush!" cries she, distressed at his distress. "I don't refuse you because I think you either vile or contemptible, for you are neither, but only because I can't love you or anybody, and, more, I loved—loved once, and he was false to me."

Paler her sweet face grows, and a thrill of anguish convulses it.

Mr. Gerald springs to his feet with a deep muttered curse.

"The wretched the wretches!" he hisses, with a frightful venom. "St. Cloud," he says, with passion, "I would give my life to make you happy. Can't you love me a little, St. Cloud? Oh, try—try!"

She looks back at him wistfully.

Is it her fault that her heart is so dead to him? Has she ever tried to love him?

No!

"I can't!" she adds. "I'm sorry for you, but I think my heart is turned into stone—it can't love any more. Why should you care so much for me, Mr. Travers? Do give me up and marry somebody else."

"St. Cloud, you're asking an impossibility!" he raved, looking at her with such wild, haunting, appealing eyes that she turned almost faint with excitement. "I have loved you so long—so long, I cannot tell you why or how; but I have been a changed man ever since I first looked on your luring, siren face. To win your love I would give up my chances of eternity, and, great Heaven! what are they?"

He flashes a despairing look up at the summer sky.

"Mr. Travers!" she exclaims, impetuously, while her generous tears burst forth, "I wish I had met you three months ago; I might have loved you then. You have come too late."

"Is that your answer?" demands he, in a low, breathless murmur.

"Yes," weeps she, "it's all I can say. I can't love you now."

For a moment he seems stricken into stone; then a fierce change sweeps over his small, sinister features; he bursts into a wild, savage laugh.

"Then by Heaven, I'll marry you without the love!" shouts he; "you're mine these ten years, and I won't give you up!"

"Sir!" cries she, appalled, yet cringing with indignation. "How dare you!"

"You are mine, St. Cloud—my wife!"

And like a tiger he springs upon her, seizes her in a suffocating embrace.

In spite of her shriek of horror and frantic struggles she cannot free herself until his arms loosen their hold and he stands off, mocking her with an exultant smile.

"Go now and leave me for ever, madman!" she pants, blazing with fury. "I would put a knife to my heart before I would marry such a miserable man as you!"

With a muttered malediction or exclamation—she cannot hear which—he turns and rushes towards the shore.

Has he gone to destroy himself in his insanity? for assuredly Mr. Gerald Travers must be a maniac.

Struck with grudging pity she follows him slowly,

calling in a faint and cowardly voice, "Come back, Mr. Travers!" terrified that he will obey and terrified that he will not.

As she approaches the bank she sees Gerald rapidly returning to her, while the boat is gliding away with no apparent propulsion, and she thought rushes upon her that she is again in the power of that frenzied creature.

"Oh, treachery! treachery!" she cries. A thousand suspicions dart through her mind. She sinks upon a mossy stone, and while as any snow-wreath she wrings her hands.

He darts to her side, and snatches her in his arms, and half suffocates her with mad kisses; she gasps, and sobs, and lies back limp and senseless.

"Don't be afraid," he mumbles in the deaf ear, between his kisses on the rigid lips; "don't be afraid, my darling, my adored; for though I love you better than my own soul, I would not harm you; no, by Heaven and earth I swear it!"

About daylight the next morning the Reverend Edward Treuman, who officiates in the hideous brick mill opposite Miss Bayne's abode, is awakened from his slumbers by a doleful voice under his window calling his name.

Obediently the unwelcome summons, the obliging clergyman is soon standing on his dewy door-step, face to face with Mr. Cornelius Crimble, his new parishioner.

"Oh, Mr. Treuman!" groans Mr. Crimble, "what are we to do? Such a night as Miss Bayne and I have spent—oh, such a night!"

"Dear me, sir, what has occurred?"

"My Cousin Trevanion"—with a sigh fit to choke him—"has eloped with a young man who was paying her attention at our house—eloped last night."

"Is it possible? That quiet, pretty girl who sat in your parlour last Sunday? I am amazed. There is no doubt about it, is there?"

"Oh, if I could think there was! But no, it must have been all arranged between them. He took her out for a sail in a boat yesterday afternoon, and that was the last of them. Oh, what a disgrace for us who value our reputation so much."

And Mr. Crimble blows his lugubrious nose in deep affliction.

"They may have met with an accident," suggests the charitable parson, reluctant to believe in the depravity of so fair a piece of flesh and blood as St. Cloud has seemed to him.

"Not they," groans Mr. Crimble. "I wish they had. I called to ask you if you would kindly say a few words to my poor aunt, for she is quite overcome. I am going with a party of men to drag the river in case they might have been upset, although I am convinced that they did not."

"As it is yet rather early for a visit to Miss Bayne, I will accompany you," says the clergyman, painfully interested; and so in a trice they set forth.

The village is ringing already with the news of Miss Trevanion's elopement with her lover, and quite a body of on-lookers accompany them and the men who are to drag the river.

They slowly work down the stream, and without avail, until they arrive opposite the tiny island. Here Mr. Crimble utters a startled exclamation.

"My! my! I see the scraps of a keel on the gravel there!" he cries.

Nobody else can see it, but his eyes are likely sharpened by jealousy, for he persists that they have landed there wherever the boat is now.

One of the men gives a shout for no particular motive surely, for, of course, if there is a pair of lovers hiding from their friends on the island, they will not be apt to respond to the voice of the pursuer.

Something does respond, however, and it is the shrill, hysterical scream of a woman.

Next moment the missing girl flies down to the shore, waving her white hands joyfully.

A boat is pushed off at once, and conveys Mr. Crimble to the spot.

The Reverend Mr. Treuman, catching a glimpse of another inhabitant on the little island, walks off with a sorrowful air; but the score of villagers that are left level forty ecstatic eyes upon the guilty dénouement.

Scarcely does the boat touch bottom when Miss Trevanion rushes into the water and clutches Mr. Crimble's bonny digits with convulsive energy.

"Oh, Cousin Corry," she sobs, "I thought you would never come to find us."

Her face is haggard, her eyes heavy; she has every appearance of having caught a violent cold.

Cousin Corry lifts her into the boat with awkward viaticum averted.

"Where is the young man?" he inquires, with agreeable formality.

No answer need be expected from her; she has thrown herself into the bottom of the boat and is crying wildly.

They wait in solemn silence for a few moments,

and Mr. Gerald Travers appears from the other end of the island and climbs into the boat, seated himself at the extreme opposite end from that occupied by the young lady.

He looks as black and sullen as if the Evil One possessed him.

The men wink to each other, and row with all their might back to the village against the current.

Mr. Crimble sits bolt upright, his arms folded rigidly across his virtuous breast, gazing glassily into nothing.

There is an absolute dearth of curiosity; nobody seems to want to know how the adventure happened, nobody cares to ask for any explanations.

There is not the smallest interest manifested in Miss Trevanion's hysterics or Mr. Travers's dumbness.

Like a funeral cortege the boat passes through the village, stared at by every eye, and stops opposite the cottage where Aunt Becky stands ready for the fray.

Dear as is this blessed abode, and small as is the love to lose between them, Miss Trevanion is so moved at sight thereof that she flies up the worny path and throws her arms around her wrinkled relative, pressing an impulsive kiss upon the leathern jaw, which cannot be averted quickly enough to escape the contamination.

"Aunt Rebecca! oh, Aunt Rebecca! what a frightful time I have had!" quavers the young lady.

"Niece Trevanion," returns Miss Bayne, with the warmth of a refrigerator, "come in here."

She takes her by the shoulder and pushes her into the mouldy parlour, where the freshly risen sun is sportively gliding up all the darts on the rug-carpet.

Mr. Crimble, following hard with Mr. Travers by his side, shut the door in the faces of the three men, who have pursued them with perhaps not an unreasonable expectation of something for their trouble.

Having shut the parlour door, Mr. Crimble puts his back to it, and glares upon the youthful pair.

"Aunt Rebecca," twangs he through the long length of his pendulous nose, "they were out all night. I have asked for no explanation, and have got none. I leave you to deal with them."

"Niece Trevanion," says Aunt Rebecca, levelling insulting eyes at St. Cloud's innocent face, "what excuse have you to offer for your disgrace?"

The young girl regards her for one breathless moment of astonishment, then flashes a proud glance at Mr. Travers.

"Sir, you must explain the accident,"—with generous device—"which deprived us of our boat!" she exclaims with crested head.

He takes no heed of her, like a stone, hard and cold, he remains in movable, only that his gleaming eyes are glued upon Cousin Corry's with a loathing and fascinated glare.

"Hypocrites!" groans Aunt Becky, lifting her watery eyes to the ceiling. "Oh, Sister Hattie, it's well for you that you're in your grave this day!"

"What do you mean, Aunt Rebecca?" demands St. Cloud, passionately. "What do you dare to suspect of me? Mr. Travers can explain all that has happened if he will; and you will see how abominably you have wronged me. Will you not explain, Mr. Travers?" flashing round upon him.

Not a word does he say, still intent upon Mr. Crimble's eyes.

"Then if you won't, I must!" she cries, indignantly. "We landed on the island to explore it, and the boat drifted away" (much too generous to expose the cowardly vengeance that sent it adrift); "so we were forced to remain where we were until help came. What else could we do? We could not swim ashore, for the current was by far too strong. I wish I had tried it, though, for I would rather be drowned than insulted as you are insulting me."

"A proper situation for an unmarried female to be left in!" cries Aunt Becky, malignantly; "and the whole village ringing with it! Oh, my goodness gracious me! why did I ever have anything to do with a girl of your character?"

St. Cloud lifts her beautiful, pure eyes, blazing with outraged innocence through the tears of shame, and confronts the smacking and inveterate gaze of her aunt firmly.

"It was a miserable situation, but not a shameful one," she says, bravely; "and since you put me on my defence, and Mr. Travers will not speak, I will tell you the truth. Mr. Travers asked my hand in marriage yesterday, and I refused him. In his pique he sent the boat adrift, intending to terrify me into submission. As first I remained unquenched through the shock of discovering his scheme, and when I recovered he allowed me to conceal myself in one end of the island, while he occupied the other. He was

too much of a gentleman to insult me by his presence under such circumstances, and I did not again speak to him until now in your presence. If he will be good enough to corroborate what I have said, he will only do me common justice, and surely that reparation is due after the wrong he has done me."

Shame-facedly she appeals to him, the tears gushing over her scorching cheeks, her bosom heaving wildly with the ignominy of her position.

"Is that the truth, Mr. Travers, or is it not?" demands Cousin Corry, in a bullying tone.

Mr. Travers awakes from his stony silence, his eyes gleam recklessly, his face is distorted by a wicked grin.

"What does it matter, my dear, what they think?" he asks St. Cloud, with exultation. "You're going to be my wife, you know."

She eyed him in horrified incredulity, her very lips dead-pale; she sees the desperate, hungering passion in his eyes, and a frightful conviction seizes her that out of last night's adventure have been forged the chains which are to bind her as his slave for ever.

She sees that her name is in his keeping, that she must marry him or be an outcast, and the whole vile plot by which he has won her flashes before her eyes.

With a groan of abject terror, she slinks upon the floor, drowned in tears, oblivious to all around her, and swallowed up in the utter blackness of despair.

When she again returns to the present she finds that she has been transported to her own mouse-perfumed bed-chamber, and is lying upon her coarse bed.

The green blind is drawn down, a mug and a thick slice of bread lies upon the table.

According to the good old times, the rebellious miss is locked up and fed on bread and water as long as the rage of the elders burns hot against her.

Stunned with misery, St. Cloud hurries about the room trying to think what she will do, but the fever that exposure has brought upon her burns hotter and hotter and distracts her thoughts.

Remembering that she has not eaten since the banquet of hacon and cabbage at room yesterday, she essays to swallow some bread, but almost chokes over it—to drink some water and suffer untold agonies of nausea.

As miserable, frightened and bewildered a little soul as any out of a madhouse, she stands with her hands to her head, weeping distractedly, and at last throws herself upon her bed and sobs herself to sleep.

All that day she lies alone, heavily sleeping or still more heavily waking.

Over and over again she hears the wash of the river on the pebbly shore, the whirr of the night birds, the croak of the frogs, the drip, drip of dawy leaves above her, while cohorts of stars shine into her half-shut eyes and ghostly chills run through her veins.

She is living last night over again with feverish reiteration, over and over, until her face flushes scarlet and her eyes grow bloodshot and her hot lips mutter anxious questions which she forgets to finish, and she hears tormenting answers which are not uttered by human lips.

As the day wanes her bodiless visitants become so numerous that the gaunt room can scarce contain them all, and it becomes difficult for her to hold converse with such an animated company; so she argues, laughs, pleads, and contracts with crazy energy, until her shrill, childish voice sends the troops of gliding mice scampering to their holes, and rous the vultures below stairs, who are holding high carnival over cold beans and a bottle of porter.

Aunt Becky creeps up stairs, candle in hand, listens awhile, and then pokes her delectable nose in at the door.

"Niece Trevanion, you must be quiet," she says, wagging her verdant locks. "You need not expect that the companion of iniquity will hear your outcries and elope with you a second time, for he has been turned from my door long ago, as he should have been at first; and though he may impudently stay at the hotel a year, he shall not hold any farther intercourse with you under my roof."

"Hush!" whispers the girl, rising up, with her sweet face flushed and convulsed. "What do you say, Bertie? is he false; do you think?"

Miss Bayne takes a step into the chamber, peers into the bewildered face of the girl, goes to the door, and croaks out:

"Cornelius!"

Cousin Corry ascends, stands modestly upon the threshold, glowers at his naughty cousin, and makes a frightful grimace signifying dismay.

Then the good Samaritan physic her, and between them she is smuggled into a deep-drugged sleep.

Conscious again, when unnumbered days have passed, St. Cloud drags herself from her miserable couch and contrives to dress herself.

What is to be done now?

She wonders languidly whether she is strong enough to run away from this awful cot, and seek Carrington Roselle's protection from these terrible relatives.

While she sits, white and panting, upon the one wooden chair which graces the luxurious apartment, the door is unlocked, and some one rushes in and flings herself with a great sob round St. Cloud's neck.

"Oh, Sainte! Sainte! Sainte darling, what's this that's happened to you?" cries Bertha Roselle.

(To be continued.)

THE ISLAND MYSTERY.

CHAPTER XI.

WHEN the Australian had finished his colloquy with old Majorie, he strolled off, accompanied by Jessie to join the party of pleasure seekers.

He reached them at an eventful moment.

The wizard had apparently changed his mind and, quitting the solitude of his cave had decided upon showing himself to the visitors of his island.

His appearance before them was unexpected and somewhat startling—perhaps to Kinmouth more especially.

A sudden resolve came to the Australian, and he stepped forward instantaneously to act upon it.

"I beg pardon, my good sir, but your face has a familiar look. I really think I have met you before. Have you ever visited Australia?"

That luminous, magnificent eye turned upon him calmly, went slowly and deliberately over his person, came back again to his face and settled there, as the wizard replied, indifferently:

"There is nothing about you striking enough to induce pleasant remembrance. I do not retain evil impressions. It matters very little whether you saw me in Europe, Africa or Asia, first or last, since it hath profited neither of us."

Mr. Kinmouth was able to restrain the outward exhibition of his rage by the inward exultation over the promise of old Majorie. He only responded, briefly:

"As you please about that."

And returned to Jessie's side, whispering, in response to her questioning look:

"It is beyond question. I am glad Shenstone did not come."

And presently the whole party entered their boats, and took their departure.

Then the strange master of the island walked to and fro along the shore, lost in deep reflection.

"Well," exclaimed he, "I think I can baffle him, crafty as he is. I can count upon Mark's help, I am sure. How fortunate I carried his boat to the cave, to ride out the storm. I have no fear of Serle, but I want those proofs for the world. However I can get them. If old Majorie were what she once was I should have no fear but she could get them of him. Ha! what is this? A boat returning—that arch villain may be in it—there is no crime too great for him. I had better retreat."

He moved cautiously to a thicket, evidently tangled and matted together for the purpose of concealment, but in a moment came out again.

It was Rufus White in the boat, and he was quite alone.

He came up to the lodge, bowing every other step.

"I beg your pardon, your highness—hem!—your worship. I don't mean to intrude, but—one of the ladies left her parasol, and sent me after it; and beside, your worship, I have a letter for Master Mark; the mistress was anxious for him to get it to-day, and I hope you won't be offended at my boldness. I wanted to know myself how he's getting along. You said I wasn't to let any one know where he was, so I didn't give the letter when any of the rest were here, and I hid the parasol on purpose to make them send me back."

And concluding his lengthy speech, Rufe produced the letter, and looked as if he expected to receive an electric shock when the letter passed from his hands into those of the wizard.

The latter could scarcely conceal his amusement, but he answered, kindly:

"You have done rightly, my good fellow; your young master is particularly anxious that his friends remain ignorant of his residence here. I will give him the note at once."

Rufe fidgetted. He was not sure but his audacity would precipitate him into all the horrors of the boiling caldron he had a vague idea must exist

somewhere on the island, but still, in heroic friendship, he ventured to ask:

"If you please, your worship, it is no disrespect I mean, but I should like to see Mr. Mark with my own eyes, to make sure he is safe."

"But I told you he was hurt; he can't come to you for several days yet," was the reply.

"And couldn't I go to him? He's a likely lad and I've loved him like a son; it's laid heavy on my mind that I should be keeping it a secret, when, maybe—begging your pardon, I mean no disrespect, you know—maybe he wasn't so clever as I supposed!"

The tears stood in the honest eyes as Rufe finished. The wizard could not resist them.

"Man," he cried, suddenly, "if I trust you will you swear to keep silent upon all you see? Not alone for my sake, but for the welfare of your young master himself! I respect your fidelity to him; I am willing to trust you, if you promise."

"Ah! that I will, your worship, and a heavy weight it will take from my mind to see young Mister Mark smart and cheerful like."

"Come, then," responded the wizard, and led the way along the beach to a narrow path, which he followed some distance, and then turned into what seemed to the obedient Rufus an impenetrable wilderness. The superstitious sailor was not in the least surprised to see the bushes turning aside like gates, the very trees walk out of his path as it seemed; but when at last the Nest was reached, and the wizard flung open the door he was fairly transfixed with astonishment.

There sat the youth he had pictured as pining away beneath a mysterious disease, or gloomily enduring imprisonment, with sparkling eyes and glowing face, sketching the features of a very charming model, who sat demurely before him, with crossed arms, but roguish eyes and saucy lips.

"Shiver my timbers, if that don't beat Neptune and all his mermaids!"

Mark turned round in astonishment, while Oriole started away in mingled embarrassment and surprise.

"Why Rufe, old fellow, how came you here?"

"His worship brought me. Hi! Mister Mark, and I don't wonder you're in no hurry to get away. And the idiot I have been, thinking you might be kept again your will."

The wizard came in behind, smiling at the sailor's perplexity.

"Now be sure, honest Rufus, that you can trust your master a little longer with us before you leave."

"What was he afraid I was foully dealt with? Ah, I see! I am much obliged to you for your interest, Rufe, but you perceive I do not need much sympathy. My ankle is nearly well, beside."

"I brought a letter to you; perhaps you'll read it before I go. I shan't be alarmed any longer about you, Mister Mark."

"A wise resolution; let me have the letter then—I may wish to answer it."

Mark broke open the note, and read it with a darkening face.

"MY DEAR MARK.—If it is possible for you to return without any injury to yourself, I pray you come home at once. Your father's condition alarms me exceedingly. Sometimes I tremble for his mind. The Australian is still with us. He has suggested to your father a singular idea—that you are to marry Jessie. What do you say to it? If you cannot come write at once to your anxious and affectionate mother."

Mark folded up the letter and glanced up into the wizard's face with a troubled eye.

"Don't you think I can be got safely to the boat? It is necessary that I should go home at once. There is no telling what new mischief that man will hatch up, and I see plainly my poor mother is sorely tried. Sue needs my help."

He handed the note for his inspection.

The wizard read it through with grave attention. "Perhaps you might go. We could carry you to the boat. The limb is certainly in a favourable condition? But what is your decision? Do you hasten to consummate the marriage referred to?"

Mark's eye flashed.

"I would cut off my right hand sooner. I go to demand an explanation of my father why this evil-minded old man is allowed to hold sway at the Manor. If he has any claim I desire to know and understand it. I want my ankle to be well, for if that old man must remain I shall go out from the Manor. I am young and strong—there are a dozen ways I can earn my own livelihood, and the army and navy are always open. Don't you think I will sell my manliness in that way? Do you think anything shall compel me to marry a woman I have always regarded as my sister, who could not possibly hold my heart's dearest affection, especially since that heart has spoken for itself in unmistakable terms?"

"I know not her true name or yours; your history

is a sealed book for me; all that relates to you is mysterious, and gives no hint for one to judge of your antecedents; and yet, here and now, in Rufus White's presence, I declare that I respect, esteem and love you both, and that the dearest hope I have is that some time you will give me permission to take to my home and heart the dear little Oriole of this happy and peaceful, if secret, nest. If you can give me your confidence, I shall be grateful; if you withhold it, I shall in nowise condemn you. Now, I think, you understand me, and can judge something of my motives for action in this matter."

The wizard was deeply affected. The broad chest heaved, the bright drops gathered in his eyes, and his voice was tremulous, as he replied:

"Generous, trusting, noble youth! it is possible I have ever borne you angry feelings? Your confidence in us shall not be tried for long. It was, indeed through the merciful interposition of providence that you were sent here. You have won from me the pride and affection of a father. You may count upon my aid in this matter, and, believe me, it will prove more powerful than the wiles of that old man."

"And Oriole, what does she say? Will she sometimes fold these bright wings upon this faithful heart? will she allow the wounded knight she saved to teach her love's sweet lesson as these halcyon days have taught it unto him?" whispered Mark.

Oriole stood, with her arms crossed, her beautiful eyes upon the floor.

Slowly, while Mark was speaking, the soft pink of her cheek deepened to scarlet, and overspread her whole face, very shyly, and for the briefest glance she lifted her eyes to his.

"I think the lesson is perfect now, Mark; if you believe you can improve it, and my father say not nay, you shall be my master."

And she fled away to her little room, to escape the smiling eyes around her, and Mark's exclamation of blissful gratitude.

"Now, then, for home. Oh! I have a brave heart to battle with them," said Mark, gaily.

"How will you manage to get me there by my own efforts?"

"We will try a swifter fashion; there is a superfluous door somewhere. Can't we take him upon in between us, Rufus?"

"Certainly, certainly, your honour," stammered Rufus, considerably perplexed, albeit, somewhat relieved from his graver fears of the wizard, by this little episode.

The master of the island handed up the door, and in a trice Mark was laid upon it.

But Mark was looking wistfully at the door through which Oriole had vanished.

"Oriole, Oriole, dost thou not sing a good song?"

The door unclosed, and the sweet face, lips quivering, eyes overflowing, cheeks aflame, hovered a moment in sight.

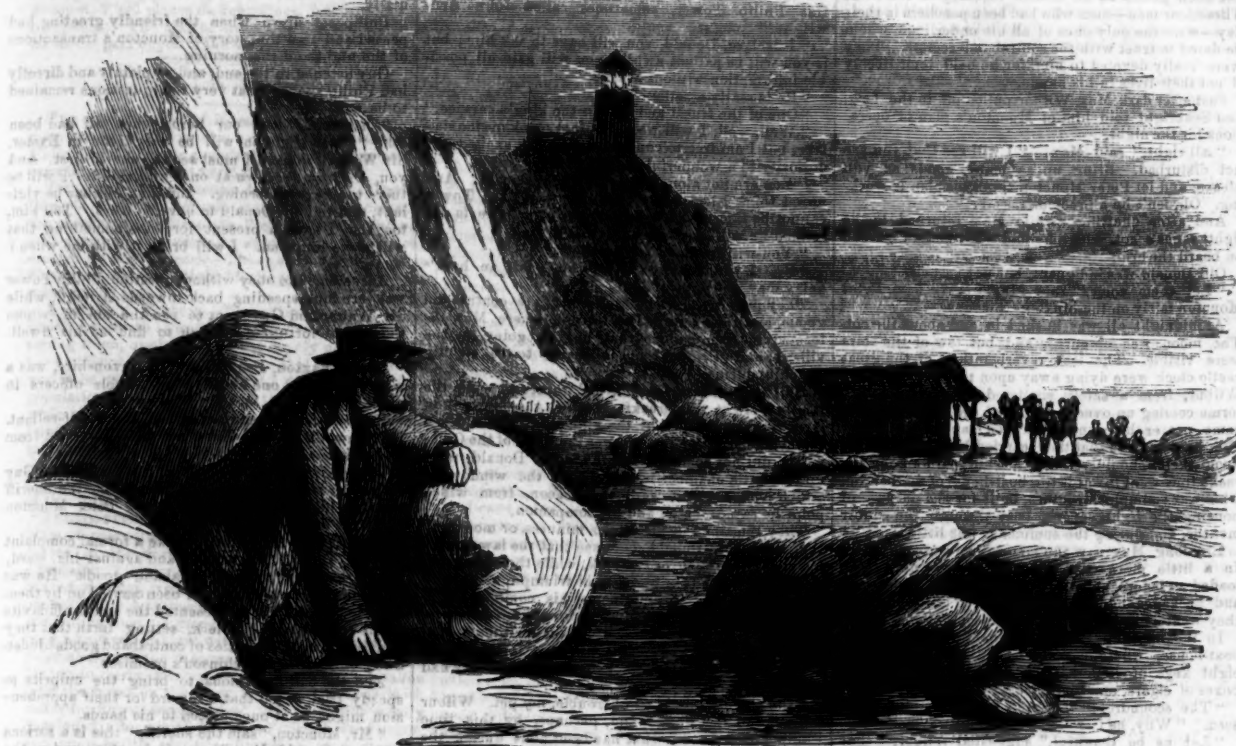
"Good-night, dear Mark. Heaven keep you from evil!" faltered she, and hastily retreated again.

"Ho, now for the boat," said Mark, cheerily. "I go like a hero on the shoulders of the brave!"

(To be continued.)

A CORRESPONDENT in Rome says that Mr. Warrington Wood, the sculptor, is at his own expense preparing a medallion portrait of Keats to adorn the poet's grave in the cemetery, and bearing the inscription suggested by Keats a short time before his death—"Here lies one whose name was writ in water." The portrait is modelled from a mask in the possession of Severn, one of Keats's most faithful friends.

WHOM NOT TO MARRY.—Women who love their husbands are happy and at rest. "Those who do not are disturbed and restless. They are always seeking for some means of killing time. They are ready to flirt at any moment. Their children are according to their means, either hidden in nurseries or under the care of French bonnes, or handed down to Sally, the upstairs girl, to shake, and slap, and stuff with sugar, as her wisdom dictates; while society and amusements of all sorts occupy their mother's time. Home is not happy to the poor woman, because she has chosen her mate foolishly—because she trusted to that "love after marriage" which mercenary old people promise those who make what they call a "sensible match." Sad as a neglected wife, who loves her husband well, must be, I believe she is happier than this poor restless creature, though she be worshipped. The love of one we do not love becomes simply a bore, especially in the close intercourse of home life; and she who does not give her heart to her husband is not likely to care much for his children. So, girls, if you do not love your lover, don't marry him. Remember that marriage is a serious step, and that when you give him your hand, that he may encircle it with a wedding ring, you seal the happiness or misery of your natural life. Don't marry unless you are sure of your love for him and his for you.—M. E. D.



[MAX ON THE WATCH.]

EDITH OF THE CLIFF;

THE SMUGGLER.

CHAPTER IV.

In due time the vessel containing the fair Edith returned to the spot whence she had started on her nefarious errand, and the captive was transferred safely into the care of her friends to be conveyed to the cot before the steward of Arncliffe had noticed her unexpected arrival.

It was very near the middle of the afternoon when Peter Moncton, breathless with excitement, boarded the brig. Seabright was leisurely pacing up and down the quarter-deck, and the few men of the crew were engaged on the fore-castle. The running rigging had been all neatly laid up, the deck scrubbed, and the brass work scoured.

"Mr. Seabright, how is this? Have you sped on a wild not known here or have you transferred your charge to other hands? When did you arrive?"

"I dropped anchor an hour before noon, sir."

"How? and did not report to me?"

"In truth, Mr. Moncton, I could not well report. I dared not leave my vessel." The steward cast a quick glance around and was not slow to discover that the new men of the crew were missing. Catching the lieutenant by the arm, he gasped:

"There is the girl?"

"My dear sir," returned Seabright, shaking off the heavy hand, "give me your attention and I will explain."

"But, Ralph Seabright, where is the girl? Where is Edith of the Cliff?"

"Mr. Moncton, you must hear the whole story before you are done, and I will give you the events of my trip in order."

"Well, go on. In mercy's name, speak. Good Heavens, have you been thwarted? Have you allowed yourself to be caught napping—you, Ralph Seabright?"

The smuggler was not at all moved by the outburst; sitting down upon the trunk of the companion-way, he said:

"I made sail last evening with a fair and good wind, sir, though a light one, as you know. I held the first watch, until moonlight, and, having seen the girl safely in her room, I turned in, leaving the deck

to Mr. Arnwright, and giving him the course I would have him steer. I had been asleep, as I afterwards found, nearly three hours, when I was aroused by the swinging of the brig's yards, and upon hurrying on deck I found her heading directly back for the Devonshire coast. What did it mean, I asked. And John Arnwright explained what it meant. He and his eleven men, who had shipped at Falmouth, were shipped in the interest of Guy Drummond. This Guy Drummond, sir, is a post captain in the Royal Navy, and it was by his orders given in writing to Arnwright that our old men had been impressed. It was a very carefully contrived plot, sir, and very successfully carried into execution.

"Enough to say, sir, that I found Arnwright not only in command of the brig but every one of my old men had quietly surrendered. And they could not well have done otherwise, for the man-o-war's-men not only outnumbered them but were far stronger, man for man, and thoroughly armed. What could I do? I appealed to Jack Barbolt and Bill Flaxam, but they had surrendered and would not budge. If I could have gained anything by striking, I would have struck; but Arnwright very soon made me understand that I could gain the most by giving in. If I would surrender the girl up to him, and allow him to take her back to her home, he would pledge me his word that neither myself, my crew, nor the brig should be held to legal account for any past transactions. I accepted the proposition, making a virtue of dire necessity, and here I am. Guy Drummond and Donald Murchinson boarded me as soon as my anchors were let go, another took away the girl, and Drummond also carried off his men."

Peter Moncton had no reason to doubt a single statement of the story; yet he could not understand. Angry and perplexed, he asked how Drummond could possibly have got his men off to Falmouth.

"He is a wonderful man, sir," said Seabright, in reply. "He learned that the brig was expected on his very first arrival, and he speedily took measures to gain a power on board."

"Well, well, we won't discuss that. It is evident that this Guy Drummond—"

He stopped here, as though a startling thought had struck him, and, with an abrupt oath, he started across the deck. He came back and laid his hand upon the smuggler's arm. His eyes were opened wide, and a look of deep significance was upon his face.

"Seabright, you say this man, this Drummond, is a post captain in the Royal Navy?"

"Yes, sir."

"How do you know?"

"Arnwright, who has served under him, told me."

"And where did he earn his commission?"

"In India—or, in China."

"And how long is it since he left India?"

"He must have come from there directly here, sir, or very nearly so."

"By Saint Peter! I understand it now. Guy Drummond has gained a secret which I thought only possessed by me. He is seeking a prize—a prize which might have been mine but for his meddling. By Heaven! shall it be his, or shall it be mine? Ralph, do you think that Drummond can hold any positive evidence of my connection with this contraband traffic?"

"I do not see how he can, sir."

"Nor do I. He cannot, I am sure. Ay, it is all plain now. I thought at first that he had made his appearance for the purpose of gaining information against the smugglers, but I know now that he has come all the way from India for the sole purpose of entrapping a prize of an entirely different character. He wants to gain possession of the maiden called Edith of the Cliff!"

"Upon my life, sir," said Seabright, with real surprise, "you would make this girl out to be something wonderful."

"She is all that, Ralph, as you shall be given to understand if she is ever Richard's wife! Hal the battle is clearly defined now. Oh! I wish I had known before. But it may not yet be too late. Will you stand by me, Ralph? Stand by me to the end, and when Edith is Richard's wife I will give over to you one half of my interest in the brig."

"I will stand by you, sir."

"Can you bring six men on shore with you to-night who will be true to me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then come. Meet me under the Cliff at ten o'clock."

"But, sir, I must tell my men what is expected of them."

"I'll tell you what is expected, Ralph. I want to get a load of contraband goods secreted in the boat-house of the beacon, and if possible to get some silk and laces into the house."

"We'll do the best we can to that end, sir."

"All right. I'll have Miss Edith arrested with her guardian, and thus for a time, at least, get her beyond the power of Captain Guy Drummond. Something may turn up to help me. You will not fail me?"

"I will not fail you, sir."

Peter Moncton returned to the shore, where, having called for a faithful henchman from the castle, he

proceeded to the secret cave in the hillside, and broke out such goods as he wished to carry to the Cliff. These four men—men who had been poachers in their day—were the only ones of all his underlings whom he dared to trust with the contraband secrets. They were really devoted to him, for he held their liberty if not their lives in his hands.

Just after dark Max Wilbur pulled off to the brig, and Seabright told him of Moncton's plan of operations for the night.

"All right," said Max. "I will see that you are not disturbed. Bring up as many goods as you please, and let Peter Moncton think his plan is working. Oh, isn't he a precious rascal?"

And after chatting awhile Max returned to the lightkeeper's cot, where he told what he had learned on board the brig.

Old Donald was indignant, but not surprised. "Let them come," said Max. "We have Peter Moncton fairly on the hip."

At midnight all was hushed in and about the cot. The moon was obscured, and but few of the stars were visible. The last reverberations of the great castle clock were dying away upon the air when Max Wilbur, from a safely sheltered outlook, saw dark forms coming up over the brow of the Cliff. As they came nearer he counted ten men; and when nearer still, he could see that they carried kegs and baskets upon their shoulders. By a side path among the rocks they went towards the boat-house of the beacon. This was a simple structure, built for the purpose of housing the lightkeeper's boat through the winter months, and during the summer it was little used.

Ere long Max saw the men return empty handed. In a little more than an hour they came again, loaded as before, and when the second lot of breakers and packages had been deposited in the boat-house they went away and did not come back.

In the morning Max and Donald went out to the boat-house, where, covered by old sails, they found eight kegs of liquors, three baskets of wine, a few boxes of cigars, and four packages of salt and butter.

"The second lot!" muttered Donald, when he had seen. "Why, he is worse than a highwayman."

"Let us be thankful," suggested Wilbur, "that he is powerless for further harm."

"I suppose he means to have me arrested for smuggling."

"Of course that is his object."

"Both me and Edith?"

"Yes—such is certainly his plan. It is a last desperate move to get the lady once more."

"And may he not succeed?" exclaimed the old man, in alarm. "If he swears out a complaint, and the king's officers arrest us, what is to prevent his having control for a season, at least? He is the sheriff deputy and bailiff for this part of the country. His authority is considerable. If he carries his complaint to the sheriff, he will in all probability be armed with an official order for my arrest; and if he includes Edith in the complaint he will have an order for her arrest. I think I can see the aim of this new piece of villainy. It is a desperate move—the hazard of a die. He wishes to hold Edith once more in his power. If he can gain entire control of her for one night he may spirit her away beyond our ability to find her. As bailiff—as steward of Arncliffe—in the absence of the earl, his power is well nigh unlimited. I tell you, Wilbur, this thing is more threatening than you think. It is not the danger of my being tried for smuggling, or for receiving contraband goods; but it is the danger of Peter Moncton's getting control of Edith's movements—gaining possession of her person—even for an hour. I tell you, there is great danger. Peter Moncton is a man without heart, and as wickedly cruel as he is grasping and vindictive; and from what Guy Drummond has let drop I know he has some strange reason—as powerful with him as it is strange and unaccountable to me—for thus seeking to gain possession of my pet. You are one of Guy Drummond's trusted friends. Do you know why it is? Do you not know why Peter Moncton thus insanely risks so much in his pursuit of Edith?"

"My good Donald," replied Max, honestly, "I know no more in that direction than do you. But tell me, where is the sheriff of Devonshire?"

"He lives in Exeter."

"What sort of a man is he?"

"I think an honourable, just, and upright man."

"An order for arrest must come from him, must it not?"

"Yes. For simple violation of the peace, and for some other things, the bailiff can arrest upon his own warrant; but in a case of this kind—for infraction of the revenue laws—the sheriff must issue the order. At all events, it must come from some one besides Peter Moncton."

"Then, Donald, I must hasten to the village and communicate with Captain—with a—Mr. Tower—or Arncliffe, as he is sometimes called."

"Ay, Wilbur, he had better know. And—pardon me for the unseasonable interruption—who and what is this Philip Tower, sometimes called John Arncliffe?"

"I declare, Donald, you will have to ask him; but if you will be patient awhile, you will gain all possible information without asking."

"He is really a sailor?"

"One of the truest and best in the king's service."

"Well, well, I will wait. Do not think me inquisitive, but I am free to confess that he has excited my curiosity to a wonderful degree."

"You are not alone in that respect, Donald. And now I think I had better be on my way. Mr. Tower cannot be informed too soon; and when he is informed he will know exactly what to do."

"You will wait and eat breakfast?"

"No. I will breakfast at the inn. Half an hour's delay may lose my man."

They pulled the sails back over the contraband goods, and then returned to the cot, where Max informed his companions that he was going to the village, and gave in them in charge to be strictly watchful during his absence.

Half an hour after Wilbur had gone, and while the family were at the breakfast table, the steward of Arncliffe, accompanied by the village lawyer and his clerk, was seen coming up over the brow of the Cliff; but he did not come toward the cot. Donald went up to a little chamber in the gable, the window of which looked out toward the beacon, from which point he saw Moncton and his companion.

They remained inside fifteen minutes, or more, and then came out. Donald could see that the lawyer and his clerk were a surprised look, while the expression upon Moncton's face was one of triumph, as though he had succeeded in convicting his companions of something which they had been unwilling to believe.

They went away as they had come, without turning toward the cot.

"Can they do harm?" asked Edith, when they had disappeared.

"Borrow not one atom of trouble, my pet. Wilbur has gone to the village, and, perhaps, by this time Philip Tower knows what has been done during the night."

"And what will he do, think you?"

"Perhaps he will hasten to Exeter; at all events, we may believe that he will do the best that can be done."

"Oh, if he sees Guy!"

"He will do what is useful. I think you should have confidence in him so far."

"I do, guardedly, indeed I do. We shall know when Max returns."

Meantime Max Wilbur had made his way to the village without delay of any kind, and at the inn he found Mr. Tower getting ready for breakfast. In a few words he told his story.

"And," he added, in conclusion, "on my way I met Peter Moncton, accompanied by two men."

"Yes," said Tower. "I have intelligence of the steward's visit to the village this morning. He makes no move that is not reported to me. Have you been to breakfast, Max?"

"No, sir."

"Then eat with me, and then back to the cot and assure old Donald that he has nothing to fear."

"And what will you do, captain?"

"I shall hurry off post-haste to Exeter. Our chief must know this before Moncton can reach here. I think I see the old rascal's plan. He has taken the lawyer and his clerk—those were the two men you saw with him—he has taken them up to the boat-house to see the contraband goods, and upon their written affidavit he can apply to the sheriff for an order of arrest with certainty of success. I must head him off. Ah! there is the call to breakfast. Come, we can talk while we eat. I have my meals in a private parlour."

In half an hour from that time Philip Tower and Max Wilbur parted at the door of the "Arncliffe Arms" the latter to return to the lightkeeper's cot; and the former mounted upon a fleet and powerful horse, to ride away to Exeter.

At nine o'clock, in less than two hours from Arncliffe, Tower reached the old city, and found Guy at the hotel where he had said he should be found if wanted. And Guy was not alone. A gray-haired veteran, just arrived from India, was with him—a grand old veteran whom Tower knew very well—it being no less a personage than General Sir Walter Seymour, one of the most gallant and successful warriors under the crown, a man honoured and trusted by his government and well nigh worshipped by the brave, true men who served under him.

He was a man of large frame, erect and imposing; and though his hair was white yet his countenance was fresh with health and vigour. He was a handsome man, and the light of his clear, brown eyes was undimmed.

He remembered the gallant captain who had captured the Chinese pirates, and greeted him cordially.

Philip sat down when the friendly greeting had passed and told the story of Moncton's transactions of the night and the morning.

Guy listened to the end, and so plainly and directly had Philip spoken that very few questions remained to be asked.

"Of course," said our hero, when all had been told, "Peter Moncton will be very soon in Exeter. Sir Walter, you and I must see the sheriff first. And you, Phil, will return at once to Arncliffe. I will be there to-morrow morning. Bid Max Wilbur be vigilant, and tell old Donald to have no fears. Tell him, too, that I have a present for him, something that will make him glad. I will bring it with me when I come."

Accustomed to obey without question, Philip Tower was ere long speeding back towards Arncliffe, while Sir Walter and Guy went to see the sheriff, whom they were fortunate enough to find at his dwelling.

Henry Paxton, Esq., Sheriff of Devonshire, was a man of fifty and one of the most valuable officers in the kingdom.

He was tall and strong, and bold and self-reliant. He knew his duty and was not to be swayed from his fulfilment.

When all had been told him Sir Walter and Guy took their leave, and shortly afterwards the sheriff went to his office, and before noon Peter Moncton made his appearance.

The steward had come to make a formal complaint against Donald Murchinson, and against his ward, Edith, as receivers of contraband goods. He was sure the contraband had been carried on by them for a long time, and he presented the sworn affidavits of the lawyer and his clerk, setting forth that they had found large quantities of contraband goods hidden away on Donald Murchinson's premises.

And the bailiff, anxious to bring the culprits to speedy trial, asked that a reward for their apprehension might be at once placed in his hands.

"Mr. Moncton," said the sheriff, "this is a serious matter. Donald Murchinson is in office under the crown, I will make the arrest in person."

"But, sir," cried the steward, ill at ease, "if I had the warrant I could arrest them at once, and hold them for you. I really think it would be best so to do."

"You need not borrow any trouble," returned Mr. Paxton. "The arrest shall be made within eight-and-forty hours. Murchinson is an old man, and has been long in the king's service. I will come myself to Arncliffe and do the work in person. You can summon the necessary witnesses and we will hold the examination at the castle."

"If, sir, this be your final decision, if you will not allow me to make the arrest, I will have all in readiness for you."

"My decision is made, Mr. Moncton, and it is final as far as it goes. I will not fail to be on hand, and if we find the light-keeper guilty, be sure his punishment shall follow."

This was not what Peter Moncton wanted—far from it—but he knew it was the best he could get. He dared not press the sheriff farther.

As he rode homeward he thought the matter over and found ground for the hope that success might yet crown his plotting.

If he could hold the fair Edith for only one night, a prisoner in the castle, he would find means to spirit her away.

It would be a bold thing to do, and there might be danger; but he had become desperate, and was resolved upon uttermost risk in pursuance of the much coveted prize.

(To be continued.)

A RUMOUR is current that the French coast is about to be protected from invasion by a simple and effective system of "submarine mining"—which of course is to be kept a profound secret from the engineers of other nations.

A GREAT THEATRE.—For fifteen years past the idea has been entertained of constructing an immense theatre at the junction of the Boulevard St. Martin and Boulevard Magenta, and thus to complete the ornamentation of the Place du Château d'Eau, in Paris. This project, which has slept for some time, has now been revived by a group of notabilities in the artistic, literary, and financial world, and M. Adolphe Sax has laid before them a project which he has for a long time studied for a theatre able to contain 15,000 persons, which he would erect in the Place Château d'Eau, at the angle indicated above, where it would be completely isolated by a street which will unite Rue de Bondy with Rue Château d'Eau, skirting one side of the Théâtre des Folies-Dramatiques. The scheme

provides for the erection of a building capable of seating 9,000 spectators, divided thus—1,600 places de loges, 2,000 places de deuxième, 2,800 places de troisième. The plan of the auditorium is semicircular at the part opposite the stage.

SCIENCE.

The alterations which it was some time ago decided upon to carry out in the principal sea batteries at Malta, to fit them for a revised armament, are nearly completed, at the cost of 75,000*l*.

The great new telescope designed by the Earl of Rosse is now finished, and stands on its pedestal at the observatory adjacent to Birr. It is said, by persons competent to judge, to surpass the famous one erected by the late earl. The speculum is 3*ft*. 6*in*. in diameter, and the height of the telescope above the ground is 25 feet.

A DEADLY POISON.—There are several metals which are worth more than "their weight in gold," among them, osmium, the most deadly poison known to chemistry. Twenty pounds of this deadly mineral would be more than enough to destroy the entire population of the earth. One thousandth part of a grain of osmic acid, set free in a volume of air of one hundred cubic yards, would possess such a deadly influence, that all persons respiring this air would be poisoned. What makes it the more dangerous is the fact that it has no antidote. Fortunately, very little of the substance is known to exist.

PHOTODUPLICATION.—A sheet of ordinary plate-glass, larger than the picture to be reproduced, is coated in the dark room, with a solution made by dissolving 1 ounce of potassium bichromate in 15 ounces of water, warming gradually, then adding two ounces of fine gelatine and filtering through linen at the boiling heat. A diapositive is taken from an ordinary negative, and laid with the colloidal side to the gelatine face of the prepared plate in diffused light for ten to thirty minutes. The plate is then taken from the frame in the dark room and washed with water for five or ten minutes, till the water is fully developed; after which it is dried with filtered paper, and coated with glycerine by means of a camel-hair pencil, and the excess of liquid is removed with filter-paper. From this plate a cast is made in plaster of Paris of the consistency of oil, and from the plaster cast a metal one may be taken.

UTILIZATION OF THE SUEDS FROM THE WASHING OF WOOL.—In nothing has the advance of practical science been more clearly evidenced than in the extent to which substances formerly wasted and lost are now reclaimed and made to constitute an important element in the profits of the manufacturer. One of these applications consists in the recovery of soapsuds from the washings of wool from woolen factories. These were formerly allowed to run down the sewers and into the streams, to the great pollution of the latter; but in Bradford they are now run from the washing-bowls into vats and there treated with sulphuric acid. The fat rises to the surface in a mass of grease a foot or more in thickness, which is carefully collected and treated in various ways, mostly by distillation. The products are grease, used for lubricating the cox of driving-wheels; oleic acid, which is worth about 30*l*. per ton, and used as a substitute for olive oil; stearin, worth 80*l*. per ton, etc. It is said that some large millowners are now paid from 500*l*. to 1,000*l*. a year for these suds, which a few years ago were allowed to run to waste.

DISCOVERY RESPECTING VALUE OF APPLES AS FOOD.—The value of apples as food, especially when the apples are roasted, is hardly yet recognized among us as it ought to be, but their value in feeding cattle is comparatively unknown, except in America, where it has been discovered almost by accident. Here we occasionally give a horse an apple by way of a treat, and it is well known that the animal considers it a luxury; but, except that we get rid of windfalls by giving them to the pigs, we make no use of apples as cattle food. In America, however, apples are more plentiful than with us, and sometimes they have so many that they do not know what to do with them. Hitherto there has been an idea that they did harm if given to horses or cows, but a Mr. Storer has come to their defence, and has demonstrated that, if given in combination with some highly nitrogenous food, they are not only harmless but profitable, though he will not go so far as to accept the popular rule that they are about equal in value to their own weight of potatoes. The chief thing noticed in the chemical constitution of the apple is its lack of albuminoids as compared with carbohydrates. The proportion is: albuminoids, 1.43; carbohydrates, including fat, 31.59; cellulose, 5.54; ash, free from carbon and carbonic oxide, 1.46; and the dry matter in the fresh material, 16.34.

NOISE IN SHELLS.—There are few who do not remember the childish wonder we once felt at hearing

the resonance produced by placing a sea-shell to the ear, and effect which fancy has likened to "the roar of the sea." This is caused by the hollow form of the shell and its polished surface, enabling it to receive and return the beating of all sounds that chance to be trembling in the air.

RENDERING WOOD FIRE AND WATER PROOF.—M. P. Polacci has devised a new mode of rendering wood waterproof and incombustible, which involves the use of the following composition:—Sulphate of zinc, 55 lb.; American potash, 22 lb.; alum (ammonia base), 44 lb.; oxide of manganese, 22 lb.; sulphuric acid at 60*g*., 22 lb.; river water, 55 lb. The above ingredients, with the exception of the sulphuric acid, are mixed in a boiler, where the water is added at a temperature of 115*deg*. Fahr. As soon as solution is effected the acid is gradually poured in. To prepare the wood, the timbers are placed in a suitable chamber, on gratings and separated by spaces of about a quarter of an inch. The composition is then pumped in to fill completely the receptacle, and is maintained therein in a state of ebullition for three hours. The wood is then withdrawn, and dried in the air. According to the inventor, it becomes practically proofed, and the most intense flame only carbonizes the surface very slowly.

A BEAUTIFUL OLD MAN.

How beautiful is a good old man to look at and to think upon! No matter how plain his features there is always something in his face that wins admiration. Amongst men who are disfigureable, or mean, or cruel, or in any way given over to vice, he stands in the later years of his life as specially marked and set apart as though he had an actual halo about his head.

Not because of any affectation of piety—a really good man is never sanctimonious; he lives his religion, and does not merely prate it—but because the purity of his life is so written on his features that it cannot be mistaken. The shape of a good man's head is different from that of a bad man; so is his walk different. His eyes meet yours as no bad man's ever did. Most of us have, or have had, some relative who has lived to be old, at whom we could not look without thinking how much better he was than most men.

How grand in his goodness! The wide forehead steamed with great thoughts; the deep breast to be the natural shelter for some timid woman's head; the broad shoulders had taken the cares and duties that Heaven sent so willingly that they never bowed beneath them; a man who feared no living man; to whose cheek the blush of shame had never risen, generally a man of some eminence, or, known, if he were in the humbler walks of life, as superior to his class, for no witless man is even notably good. How we loved him! How we cherish his memory!

In early youth the soul is not so strongly set upon a man, and there are faces so regular in feature and so finely coloured that they hide the evil in the hearts of their possessors as much as would; but in middle life a man can scarcely deceive; in age, never. However Nature formed their faces in the beginning, the upright old man, who has been a true and tender husband, and whose children rise up and call him blessed, is at last beautiful; and the wicked old rascal, though his dissipation have all been elegant, and though he may have broken hearts in his youth, and still drinks his champagne at a fashionable club, is hideous in the eyes of any pure woman who looks upon him.

M. K. D.

THE BEAUTY OF WOMEN.

BEAUTY is a conventional term after all, inasmuch as that which is called beautiful in one section of the world is pronounced hideous in another. There can therefore be no universal and acknowledged criterion of beauty; but the praise of it, as applied to woman, must still vary with countries and climates, each people establishing its own rules according to its fashion.

Thus, the East Indians represent beauty as black, with swollen lips, which are also rendered pendulous by attaching heavy jewels to the lower one.

Long ears are deemed a striking beauty in Peru, and indispensable to recognized loveliness in the gentler sex; while with us they would suggest humiliating comparisons.

The women of Basque, on the Bay of Biscay, think they render themselves handsome by shaving their heads.

A Mexican woman, in order to lay claim to beauty, must possess a low, narrow forehead.

The Italians fancy gross and massive forms for their women; the Spaniards, on the contrary, admire only the slender and delicate, all of which goes to prove the truth of the saying that "the beauty seen is largely in him who sees it." But let us look a little further into this subject.

There is certainly no accounting for tastes, and

personal beauty would seem to be contingent upon fashion in a large degree. Contrast the Orientals and Westerns in their understanding of what constitutes female beauty; the Eastern lady uses yellow cosmetics, the French and English dread that tinge in their complexions.

The negro adores the thick lip, fat nose and oblong tint in his mistress; were he capable of producing a Venus in marble he would endow it with crisp hair, or he would represent the Graces of the colour of basalt.

Who does not remember the anecdote of the coloured painter who once exhibited a picture of Napoleon, representing a group of angels, in which they were depicted, angels, wings and all, as black as the ace of spades.

The American Indian would think his dusky bride deformed had she not the high cheekbones of her race. He sees beauty in her muscular figure and coarse, unkempt locks, black as night itself.

The English and Germans delight in the blonde tresses of their women, and obesity is a charm with them; the French and Americans prefer the brunette, characterized by slender waists and feminine delicacy.

The simple fact that a Chinese belle colours her teeth black in order to enhance her attractions shows that material beauty with the unthinking, and more especially with the half-civilized world, is a matter of fashion.

"The rose is fair, but fairer if we deem for the sweet odours which dwell in it," and so with women. It is not alone the lovely exterior with which Heaven has crowned them, but those exquisite traits of gentleness and of virtue which address themselves to the soul rather than the eye and which bind our hearts for ever.

In this sense female beauty ceases to be a local deity, and whether met in the tropics or the arctic regions, under eastern or western skies, "it draws us with a single hair." External beauty may please and captivate at first, but, alas! it is as the fading rainbow, while that inner loveliness which charms us beyond the fugitive moment never palls upon the senses. The soul never wears, the more it loves the more it is exalted. Beauty may lose its relish, but the graces never.

THE Dordogne papers say that more truffles were devoured last year than has ever been recorded in the annals of gastronomy, and further, never were they so dear or so bad. What is not generally known is the fact that out of every 100 kilos. sold, at least 90 are destitute of all taste or savour. Those of a gray hue, called summer truffles, should be sedulously avoided as well as the white, which are tasteless, and which the dealers adroitly conceal amongst the black by covering them with clay, which renders them double their ordinary weight. The buyer should not hesitate to scratch the vegetable with his nail, to see that it is black inside. This year, for example, the black sort of Périgord has been partly frozen. Let us add that this succulent article does not keep well more than two months, and then only on condition that it is preserved from humidity or great heat.

ENGLISH people have the character, at all events with foreigners, of being tolerably phlegmatic, but the Americans bent them. They are telling a tale in Paris of a young American lady named Stevens. While in that city she lost diamonds worth 10,000*l*. A woman named Laporte was suspected of having stolen them, and was brought up at the Assizes of the Seine charged with the theft. It was not found possible to bring the charge home to her, and she was released. Just at that moment a journalist connected with the Paris "Figaro" came into the court bringing the diamonds, which had been found in a damaged hat-box by his children's governess. Of course there was great delight on the part of Mrs. Stevens. Not at all. She was not even there to receive her property. She had not taken the trouble to attend the trial, and had left France without leaving her address with the police. There was great embarrassment on the part of the Court. Were they to constitute themselves guardians of those jewels? Some days later Mrs. Stevens's sister called upon the journalist, saying that never reading the papers she had not seen the account of the recovery of the jewels, but had just been informed of it by the American Minister. Her sister was gone to Egypt, and the good news should be telegraphed to her.

It is little more than six years ago since George Peabody died, and already ten of the commodious and substantial dwelling-houses he bequeathed to the working-man of London have risen in the metropolis, all, save one, being completed and occupied. The first, built in Spitalfields, and completed during the lifetime of Mr. Peabody, has since been followed by the erection of others in Blackfriars road, Stamford-street, Shadwell, Islington, Chelsea, Bermondsey, Westminster, Southwark, and Pimlico. The last is still in course of building, and promises to be the

largest of all, for it stands on five acres of ground, and affords a site for 36 blocks, 12 being already far advanced on the way to completion. In the aggregate the population of Peabody's Buildings is probably not less than 10,000 persons.

MONUMENT TO LORD PALMERSTON.—The bronze statue of Lord Palmerston which has long been promised a place in Parliament Square, Westminster, is hoisted on to the granite pedestal prepared for it there. The statue of the deceased statesman represents him as he was wont to address the house, and, like that of Lord Derby close by, fronts Palace Yard. There is at present no inscription on the pedestal.

A NEW BRANCH OF INDUSTRY.—A new branch of industry has sprung up. A contractor has come forward and agreed to purchase at a good price all the old "cotton waste," a material which, after being used to clean machinery, has hitherto been burnt as valueless. He has made terms with one large department of the Royal Arsenal, and carried away some tons of the waste. This he washes in some chemical solution, which entirely cleanses the cotton of grease and other impurities, and when dried it is again as fit for use as when it left the cotton mills. The grease is clarified with fine oil, and the refuse is sold to the soapmakers.

DEATH OF MR. JOHN FORSTER.—Mr. John Forster died on Feb. 1 at his residence, Palace Gate House. Mr. Forster's health has been failing for many months. He was born at Newcastle in 1812, and was called to the bar, but from an early age he devoted himself to literature. He was editor of the "Examiner" for many years, contributed largely to the "Edinburgh Quarterly" and "Foreign Quarterly Reviews" (of the latter of which he was for several years editor), and for a short time edited the "Daily News," after Mr. Disraeli's retirement from the post. In 1855 Mr. Forster was appointed secretary to the Lunacy Commission, and in 1861 a commissioner in lunacy. Mr. Forster's historical and biographical works are very numerous and are well known. His last work, the first volume of his "Life of Swift," was published only a few weeks ago.

HE LOVES ME: HE LOVES ME NOT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

Maurice Durand," "Fickle Fortune," "The Gipsy Peer," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THAT day there were great rejoicings round Ellamere Castle, and the grand old building seemed to smile, so gay was it with banners and flags and many-coloured wreaths upon the multitude fluttering at its foot.

Mr. Thorogood had done his spitting well, no expense had been spared, and for the five preceding days the tenants and peasantry were in possession of their wants.

In the park, clustering groups of sturdy youths were hard at work, or rather play.

On the lawn were several parties amusing themselves with archery, football, quoits and other outdoor sports; all were happy and all were on the qui vive to get a sight of their young mistress and the new master.

From a window of the castle Valeria and Edgar, husband and wife, looked down upon the merry, light-hearted crowds, and both their hearts beat with a pleasurable excitement.

Their friends had left them, with a delicate thoughtfulness, to themselves for awhile, and there they stood looking on at their people, the simple folk whom they meant to make happy ones, hand in hand and speechless.

Suddenly, the sound of a great bell made Valeria start and they saw the crowds hurrying to and converging at a great marquee, which had been erected on the lawn.

"That looks like dinner!" said Edgar, with a smile, and, as Valeria was about to reply, the door opened and Mr. Thorogood put in his head.

"They are about to sit down to dinner, sir, would you and my lady like to see them and speak to them—if you are not tired?"

"No, no," said Edgar, after glancing at Valeria. "No, we are not tired; we will come down."

An unmistakable look of pleasure beamed in the old lawyer's face and he disappeared.

Edgar took Valeria's hand upon his arm and they passed down the great staircase into the hall.

There Elfy and the rest of their friends were waiting them, and a wild excitement ensued.

Such congratulations, such playful recrimination, and such unmitigated enjoyment of Edgar's surprise at the great estate and the high rank which he had married, could not be expressed quietly; for some minutes it was all confusion.

At last, Edgar said:

"We are going to the tent, will you come?"

And in a body they all proceeded to the marquee.

Grace had just been said, and as the gentry entered hundreds of anxious, eager eyes scanned the party, longing to distinguish the new master and the young Lady Florice.

As Edgar stepped forward with Valeria on his arm a tremendous roar of welcome rose from the lusty throats, which was repeated again and again, until Edgar's veins tingled and Valeria's blood warmed with the pleasure which only those who have tasted the delicious wine of popularity know.

At a hush in the cheering Edgar made a movement as if he was about to speak and there was instantly a profound silence.

Looking down the long lines of faces, he said, with evident feeling:

"My friends, we thank you from our hearts for your kind expression of welcome and affection, and I and my dear wife will set one purpose before us in the future, and that purpose shall be to deserve both your good wishes and your love. I call you my friends, and so you are, but you are quite new friends, nevertheless, for it was not until this morning that I knew how closely we were related. My dear wife—"

Here he glanced at Valeria with so manly and so noble an expression of love that the cheers rose again.

"My dear wife has given me the best thing in her love; the next is the grand, long line of friends I see before me. Once more I thank you for us both. We will not say, good-bye, for my dear wife wishes me to say that she will be happy to see you all at a ball to-night which we will hold in the great hall, and at which I hope you will dance with as much heartiness as you have shown your kindly welcome."

There was a burst of applause, and some voices suggesting the usual, "He's a jolly good fellow!" the hint was taken in the instant, and up rose the mass and out rang the distich.

To the music of the — strains the party passed out, happy and gratified in others' happiness and gratification.

Then the party spread itself out to promenade round the grounds and inspect the castle, and again Valeria and Edgar found themselves left alone.

A delicious sense of power and wealth and influence sat upon Edgar. How much good he could do. How much more of happiness could he make certain of for his beautiful wife when the cares of earning a livelihood were now gone for ever.

He could not say enough in favour of the place and all its surroundings, and Valeria listened with an innocent delight which beggars description when, for the thousandth time, Edgar said:

"To think that this is all yours, this grand castle, this land, as far as the eye can see, these servants, an army, it seems to me—all yours! I can scarcely believe that I am not the victim of delusion! All yours!"

"Say 'all mine,'" murmured Valeria. "You forget, darling, that all is yours, not mine. I am poor, penniless—it is you who are owner of this castle, this land, these servants, ay, even to the horses in the stables and the flowers in the gardens—all are yours!"

Then Edgar looked down at her, amazed at the exceeding love and trust.

"Mine," he said. "Nothing is yours, for by the law all that the wife has in her husband's. My darling, it shall not be. To-morrow Mr. Thorogood shall settle it all—all, I say—upon you. But what love, what trust is yours?"

"I have given myself to you," said Valeria, simply, "and what is all this dross? No, take it, as I give it, freely. And in return I ask only one thing—your love!"

Thus they talked, like lovers rather than man and wife, until the sound of the gong in the hall warned them that they must dress for the dinner which Mr. Thorogood had ordered for six.

What a dinner that was!

There were many great dinners in Ellamere Castle afterwards, dinners at which dukes and earls were common as strawberries, political dinners, to which the heads of the great party sat down, dinners which the fashionable world talked of for a whole season, but never such a happy dinner as that which was eaten on the day of the arrival of the new master and the Lady Florice.

How they talked, how Willie laughed—laughed actually!—and how Mr. Popplechick quoted the "British Dramatists" until you might have thought John Kemble had come to life again.

It was not until the sound of the music from the

great hall penetrated to the dining-room that the dinner came to a close, and then the party went, laughing and joyous, to join their humbler friends in the merry-making already in progress.

Years afterwards the villagers told how Master Raven danced with Mary Smith, the belle of Ellamere, and how young John Brown had the honour of taking Lady Florice for partner in Sir Roger de Coverley.

It was a ball to remember with pride, and the morning broke and stole through the stained windows of the hall until that same dance of Sir Roger de Coverley was finished, and the villagers and tenants trooped home, tired and satiated with pleasure, as the sun rose above the stars.

Only for one short half-hour had Edgar and Valeria stole away, and that half-hour, which none of the gay throng noticed, was an important and never to be forgotten one by the young husband and wife.

It happened in this wise: When the ball was at its height, when Elfy and Terry, to the admiration and delight of the party, were leading off a waltz, Valeria stole her hand into the strong white one of her husband, and, by a gentle pressure, drew him from the throng.

She had been dancing with one of the tenants, her cheeks were flushed, her eyes flashing. Never had she looked more beautiful, and Edgar, as he led her into the east gallery, looked down at her lovely face with the admiration of a lover, asking himself what he had done that he, of all men, should be so blessed.

"You are tired, my darling," he murmured. "This has been a hard and weary day for you."

"No," she murmured, "it is the happiest day of my life. To-day the dark clouds which have hung over me since my girlhood have rolled away and let the sunlight of joy and happiness into my life. You are happy, Edgar?"

"Happy!" he repeated, with a long breath, and he stooped to kiss her.

She led him along the corridor.

Presently she stopped before a door and, without speaking, pushed it open and they passed in.

As they trod over the threshold she stopped and looked up into his face.

He looked round the room. It was lighted by a small lamp, which stood on a table at the end of the room, and, aided by the fire, lit up a large, old-fashioned bed and furniture that dated back a hundred years.

"What room is this?" asked Edgar.

"This is my mother's room, the room in which she died," replied Valeria, in a low voice, "the room in which she died!"

"Why have you brought me here? You have something to tell me, darling!" said Edgar.

Valeria turned and touched his arm, that arm which her bullet had pierced.

"Edgar," she said, "I have chosen this time for the revelation of a secret which has influenced my whole life and yours"—she shuddered—"that night in Venice, when I nearly killed you!"

"That night, rather, in which I first learnt that you loved me!" he murmured.

Valeria hid her face on his bosom, then, after a moment or two, looked up.

"Edgar, I tried to kill you. Do not shudder! It is all past! I tried to kill you, for I had taken a vow, pledged an oath in this room, to my dying mother that I would do so!"

"To kill me!" said Edgar, pressing her closer to him and looking at her pale face with alarm.

"Surely you are dreaming, dearest; I never understood how that base villain—Heaven forgive me!—could have brought that night's work about! But kill me! Why!"

"Because I had sworn to do so! Not for any fault or crime of yours, but of your father's! Edgar, look at me!"

He did so, and his face grew pale as she made the dreadful sign, that sign which he had seen his dying father make.

"What does it mean?" he asked, shuddering involuntarily.

"It means, that I have sinned and that I deserve to suffer. Listen, dearest! My mother on her death-bed, bade me seek out the man who had done her an irreparable wrong; failing him himself, I was to wreak a sure and deadly vengeance upon those who bore his name. That name I never learned from her lips, for they were closed by death before they could pronounce it. A sign only she gave me, and that sign you know! Edgar, the man who wronged my mother was your father, and I had sworn, sinfully, to work your ruin. Do not shudder! It is all past! All past, and through the dark clouds Heaven has shown me the error of that dark night's oath, and a way of reparation. The man who did the wrong, the woman who was wronged, are both dead; the living can alone make atonement. Edgar, we will do so! You have done so, for you have devoted your life to me, and I—before Heaven—I

have sinned, and I do not deserve the joy which your love has given me."

Then, in broken words, she told him the dark story, while he, in turn, told her of the punishment which had befallen two of the principal actors, and, at last, hiding her face upon his breast, heard his low, murmured words:

"Let the dead past bury its dead: for as in the future is the atonement worked out by trust and love!"

And not one of the merry-makers guessed of the solemn words which had passed between man and wife, as they welcomed them back to the hall with laughter and applause.

All was summed up in those words:

"Let the dead past bury its dead; for the future let love, and love-only, reign!"

What more fitting reparation could the son of the man who had sinned find than the devotion of his life to the daughter of the woman whom that man had wronged?

There was much to be thankful for, much!

For while Horace Ellsmere and his dupe and tool, Selina Armitage, lay side by side in the strangers' corner of the cemetery at Venice Edgar Raven and his bride were happy amidst the happiness they had created.

In all happiness, however, they found a place for some gentle thoughts of that strong-willed and yet weak-hearted woman whose wasted life had been so strangely set at its close on love.

Weak of heart, strong of will, she had fallen and found rest; and for her neither Edgar, the man she had loved and deceived, or Valeria, the woman she had striven to wrong, could find nothing but gentle words and a sad regret.

Often in the coming years the happy wife thought of that other woman who lay in the quiet churchyard in sunlit Italy and found pity and gentle tears for the woman who had found life so hard a pilgrimage and its close so bitter.

While the weak-minded woman, Mrs. Armitage, lived she was well provided for, and at a quiet seaside town she found a refuge and harbour until her days were lost in that eternity which claims us all.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

CHRISTMAS was approaching and there were to be grand doings at Ellsmere at the great annual festival.

Already preparations were afoot, and a great county dinner, a ball, and a tenants' merry-making were talked of.

In all things, great or small, pertaining to the place which had lately and so strangely become his own Edgar Raven took a vast interest.

Much as Mr. Thorogood had done there still remained much to do and Edgar set about doing it with all that earnestness which had lately sprung up in his nature.

First there was the library to replan and restock. Edgar set about the task with an eagerness heightened by love of the labour. And very quickly in place of the dull green room, with its musty volumes, there was a comfortable, nay luxurious library, bright yet not gaudy, and stocked with books both ancient and modern.

Another portion of the improvements had fallen to Valeria's care, and one morning, when the two, husband and wife, were alone, Terry being up in the town and Mr. Poppleschick and Elfy out for a drive, Valeria opened the door of the library in which Edgar was sitting writing and said:

"Can you spare me a moment, Edgar?"

Edgar rose instantly and joined her outside.

"What is it, my darling? Do you want me to fold your silk, or is it to look at the new horse?"

For this new purchase had been rather tiresome, and Edgar, who looked after man and beast with indefatigable regard, had spent hours in the stable with the new animal.

"No I want you to come with me and see whether something I have been doing lately meets your approval. Did you think I had been idle while you were working indoors and outdoors?" and she patted his arm with a key she held in her hand.

"No, dearest," he said, "but—what's the key for?"

"To unlock this door," said Valeria, and she inserted it in a door standing in a corridor which went by the name of the South Gallery.

She opened the door and led him into the room.

Edgar's first sensation was one of profound astonishment, not so much at the room, which was an elaborate studio, furnished with every article that the most wealthy and extravagant of artists could wish—old armour, Venetian glass, carved oak, the latest arrangement for lighting, fine and rare bronzes, and about a dozen exquisite statuettes in Parian above price; not so much by the

wealth of the room and sumptuousness of its decorations, was Edgar's astonishment aroused, as by the fact that the walls, where they were not covered with a purple velvet, were hung with his own pictures, which he had painted in Venice and London and everywhere.

Nearly all of them were there, collected and arranged in the most tasteful manner.

With delight, admiration, and gratitude, he turned to the fairy who had worked this marvel and caught her to his heart.

"Will it do? It is not good enough, I know; but will it do, Edgar?"

"My darling, it's fit for a sultan. It is magnificent, delicious; if a man cannot paint here, he cannot paint at all! But the pictures, how did you come by them? Why, these were sold in all four quarters of the globe! This I remember was sold in London, and those at Venice; this and this an art dealer bought and took to France! How did you get them, and why?"

"Because no one could appreciate or value them so well as I can, and I was jealous, unreasonably jealous, that others should have them! It was all Willie Nugent's wish. He has scoured Europe for them; we were determined to get them, and here they are, save one."

"And that?" said Edgar.

"Was a picture you painted," replied Valeria, blushing and turning her head, "of a lady some time ago."

"And did you think I could part with that?" said Edgar, reproachfully.

"No! not if it could have purchased the bread to save my life! Stay there a moment, darling." And, placing her on one of the couches with which the room was plentifully furnished, he left her.

In a few moments he returned with the picture—that picture which he had painted when he first learned to love her.

"You were beautiful then, darling," he said, "but you are more beautiful now, for you are happy. Sweet memento of the past, you shall hang before my eyes and spur me on to that ambition which is worth nothing save as a votive offering to your sweet original. Yes, dearest, you have wealth and riches, and you have given them to me freely. I have nothing, nothing but I will have fame—fame for your sake!"

They hung the picture where he could see it as he stood at his easel, and many a day afterwards it smiled down upon him and nerved him to the task which he had set himself.

As he had said, fame came to him, and he laid it at the feet of the woman who had made that and all other good things worth having.

Be sure now that Ellsmere Castle had returned to its old grandeur the county were greatly rejoiced and much excited by anticipations and expectations.

All the great families and little families called in shoals; Edgar was asked and consented to be chairman to half a dozen different societies, charitable and otherwise.

Anxious to deserve the popularity which he had so suddenly acquired, he consented.

And very soon there rose at a proper distance from the house some capital kennels.

The hunting season commenced, and it was a glorious sight to see the three, Edgar, Valeria and Elfy, mounted on three hunters and surrounded by their friends.

Elfy, at first rather inclined to be nervous, quickly overcame the feeling, and turned out an admirable horsewoman.

One day, the meet having been advertised for Chisholme Spinney, about four miles from the castle, Edgar and the two ladies set off early in the morning, the dogs having gone on before.

It was a fine hunting morning and Edgar and his companions were in the best of spirits.

The meet was expected to be a full one, and when the party arrived at the spinney they found a large crowd, both of red jackets and blue habits.

There was also a heavy attendance of irregulars, as Edgar called them, lookers-on who had come in all sorts of vehicles, from the tandem to the buggy, to see the hounds throw off.

As master, Edgar had to go through a great deal of hand-shaking and greetings, and he always made it a part of his policy to look round the carriages if he could do so without interfering with his duties of the chase.

To-day he whispered to Valeria and Elfy:

"I wish you would just ride round. I think I see so and so," mentioning some of the county families, and the two ladies turned rein and made for the carriages which lined the common.

Before they could reach them, however, Edgar joined them.

With her usual amiable and gentle manner Valeria exchanged greetings and the three were just about to return to the hounds when Edgar uttered an exclamation, and Valeria, turning, saw

him staring at a small but extremely neat-looking pony phaeton, which stood a little in the rear.

"Who is it?" asked Valeria.

"Hush!" replied Edgar, looking over his shoulder towards Elfy. "Don't you see that is Sir Harry Vane?"

"Where?"

"There, that old gentleman with his foot bandaged, sitting in that little phaeton with the handsome ponies! What shall I do! His eyes are like hawk's and I dare not ride off; and if I do not then there must be an introduction to Elfy! What shall I do?"

Valeria thought a moment, then a bright smile lit up her beautiful face.

"Leave it to me. Go on and speak to him and I will join you presently," and, quickly turning her horse's head, she rode after Elfy.

A few words put her safely away; a gentleman—and neighbour—was only too delighted to play cavalier until Edgar returned, and then seeing Elfy safely chatting with Mr. Vigne, Valeria rode back to the pony phaeton.

As she approached, Sir Harry raised his keen eyes and scanned her face.

"Hem, Mr. Raven," he said, "you are an artist in the true sense of the word, I see, and if you paint your pictures with as much taste as you have shown in selecting a wife I should think they'd be worth having."

Edgar laughed and introduced Valeria, whose manner, so gentle, so tender, and yet so queenly, as she gave the old man her hand, would have won a grizzly bear.

"I've ridden over to see the throw-off, Lady Florio," said the old man. "It's not long ago since I was as slim as your husband there, and enjoyed a good run as much as he does; but I'm past that now, and I am obliged to be dragged to hear the music of the dogs by a pair of ponies, like the other old women."

Valeria laughed.

"You know my husband has the hounds now, Sir Harry: I wish you would come and stay with us and hear them at closer quarters!"

"Thank you, thank you," said the old man, with a slight, suppressed sigh. "I go nowhere now, Lady Florio, nowhere. I'm a lonely, miserable old fellow and do-serve to be confined—"

Here a hound gave tongue, and Edgar's hunter started and pricked up his ears.

"You go on," said Valeria, quietly. "I do not care for the run this morning. I would rather have a chat with Sir Harry, if he will allow me!"

"No, no," said the old man, "you shall not spoil your run for me!"

But Valeria, who could be determined and have her own way when she liked and wanted to, insisted, and giving her horse to a groom took a seat beside the old man, whose heart warmed to her for her kind, gentle unselfishness.

They talked for some time, Sir Harry keeping as near the hounds as the roads would allow, and every moment the charm of Valeria's manner—which was irresistible—grew upon him.

Several times she had been upon the point of risking her last card and asking him to stay with them at the castle, but she had almost decided not to risk his second refusal, when suddenly Sir Harry said:

"Look, that's a good jump for a woman! that girl sits her seat as a woman should! Zounds, madam! there's pluck and blood of the right sort in that girl whoever she is!"

It was Elfy!

Valeria's eyes glistened.

"That's a very dear friend of mine," she said, "the woman I love before the world! She's staying with me at the castle; come, Sir Harry, you will not be so discourteous as to refuse to make that young lady's acquaintance. You will come and stay with us for a few days; my husband will be so pleased if I succeed in persuading you, and I shall be delighted!"

"Well, my lady, I don't know but that I will. I admire pluck," murmured the old man, his eyes still on Elfy, who was sailing away with Edgar, the foremost of the field. "I like a girl who rides straight, and I always said that a girl who takes a bullfinch without flinching must make a good wife."

"Well, you shall judge of my friend's matrimonial capabilities if you will," said Valeria, "and study her as you may I am sure you will pass a favourable verdict. Shall we say next week, Sir Harry?"

"No, no," murmured the old man; "after Christmas! I'll come after Christmas!"

"No, no, next week," pleaded Valeria, and Sir Harry, looking up at her with old-fashioned gallantry, said, with a grim laugh:

"Lady Florio, there's no denying such a face as yours, my dear, I'll come next week."

That night, after a conference with Edgar, Valeria stole to Elfy's room and, knocking gently at the

door, asked for admittance. The door was opened the slightest in the world and Valeria stole in.

There, with her arm round Elfy's neck, she partly confided to her a scheme which she said she had formed for bringing about a reconciliation between Terry and his uncle, the gray-haired old man whom Elfy had seen her talking to on the moor.

"Yes," said Elfy, colouring as she felt Valeria's arm tighten round her waist, below which her hair hung in a bright shower. "I know; and he is coming here, do you say?"

"Yes, darling, and I want you to do as I bid you—just as I obeyed Terry you know—I want you to be kind to the poor, solitary old man, and get him to love you without knowing that you are Terry's wife—"

"Never!" said Elfy, and her proud spirit rose rebellious; but Valeria did not despair, she knew how much womanly tenderness there lay in that little heart, and with an eloquent tongue she painted the poor old man's solitary, miserable, cheerless life. She told Elfy that the old man would surely die if Terry did not return to him; and she at last brought the tears to Elfy's eyes and the promise to her lips that she would do what she could.

Sir Harry was to come; Terry was to be kept away; and Elfy was to be careful not to let the secret of her identity with Terry's sweetheart escape her.

Valeria, on her part, did not choose to reveal the fact of Terry's being heir to the baronetcy and Elfy was still ignorant that in time she must become Lady Vane.

Elfy claimed one condition, and that was that she should be left free to withdraw from the scheme if she saw fit.

"Perhaps," she argued, "I may feel nothing but anger against the man who could so misunderstand and wrong Terry, and then I could not be civil, much less kind, to him."

Valeria quite agreed; and as she kissed her gentle and proud little friend she said:

"I am quite confident of the result; and as for Sir Harry, I know that your great and only feeling for him will be pity poor, lonely, solitary old man!" "Solitary!" exclaimed Elfy, pointing. "Then why did he send my Terry away from him? He doesn't deserve ever to see him again."

Everything seemed to favour Valeria's plan or plot, for Terry wrote to any that business—that business which none could persuade him to relinquish, although Edgar had implored him to become steward of Ellmere in Ford's place—that business would keep him in London for a fortnight, during which he should not be able to come down to Ellmere; but that, by dint of hard working he hoped to spend his Christmas among his loved friends.

So that there was little fear of Terry's turning up and spoiling the plot.

In due course Sir Harry arrived, and Elfy's heart beat as she saw the pair of ponies rattle round the drive and pull up at the entrance.

Valeria herself was at the door to receive him, and Edgar's strong arm helped the man's limping footsteps through the hall.

It was arranged that Elfy should not put in an appearance until dinner-time.

Accordingly when host and hostess and guest sat in the drawing-room flattered round the fire waiting for the butler to announce the meal, the door opened and Elfy, dressed with her usual scrupulous attention to details—who could be expected to understand the mystery of costume better than she?—entered.

The old man looked up as Edgar made room for Elfy to come to the fire, and as Valeria made the two known and said "This is my dear friend, Sir Harry, the young lady who took her gate so cleverly," Sir Harry held Elfy's hand and scanned her face.

"I'm glad to know you, my dear young lady; you ride well."

Elfy, rather flushed, sat beside him, but she could not or would not talk.

She sat beside him at dinner likewise, and then found her tongue, and quickly forgot in the charm of the old man's courtly manner and his sound, sterling sense that she was playing a part.

The sadness, the knightly courtesy, which gave the old man's manner such an attraction won her heart! And then, as he was so like her Terry!

That alone would have melted her; every word he said, every glance of his quick, keen eyes reminded her of her dear hero! And before the dinner was over the old man and girl had in silence exchanged hearts.

After dinner in the drawing-room he called her to him, and, as she sat beside his easy-chair, he said:

"I'm an old man, my dear, and am used to having my whims and vagaries attended to; don't think me selfish, but sit here a little while and let us talk."

At night as he took his candle he said to her:

"I am glad I came, very glad!"

Then, as he turned from Elfy, he added:

"Heaven bless you, my dear!"

The two women cried in each other's arms that night!

Day followed day, and the sweet girl crept farther and farther into the old man's heart; he was not happy unless she was near him; she read to him, talked to him, played cribbage with him, and at last drove with him; for Sir Harry showed his affection very plainly by that concession.

"No woman can drive!" he had often declared; now he said "Only one woman can drive, and there she is!" and he would nod his gray head at Elfy.

To say that the two loved each other would be to say little; suffice it that the old man was beginning to feel the presence of the gentle, light-hearted girl necessary to his existence.

One morning he confided to her his great sorrow.

"I have a nephew, my dear, a wicked, obstinate scamp—not a scamp though—for they tell me he's honest; but he's behaved badly to me, badly, very badly! He's left me to die alone, confound him! And all for a girl with a pretty doll's face and no brains! He's mad, mad as a March hare, and I've cut him off! But I feel it, dear, I feel it, for I'm old, you see, and I cared for him, the ungrateful young reprobate!"

"Hush! hush!" said Elfy. "Don't talk so cruelly, sir; I will not listen to you, I cannot! You cannot tell that he is so ungrateful as you say! You have not seen him, perhaps, or heard what he has to say."

"No, and I don't want to," said the old man, "for the young dog would get over me; I never could refuse him anything—not even my favourite mare, Pusay, which he could jump over a fence fast enough to break his neck, the young scamp—no, no, I said I wouldn't recognize the idiot, and I won't."

And he chuckled very obstinately.

"Now if it had been only you, my dear. Oh, dear me! Just touch Paddy with the whip, he's letting Tommy do all the work."

And so it went on to the secret delight of Edgar and Valeria, who watched and rejoiced in silence.

Presently old Pop came down and the plotters trembled.

But they need not have done so, for Sir Harry when he heard that it was Elfy's father, met the old man with warm cordiality, and when old Pop began to quote the dramatists Sir Harry nodded his head and chuckled.

"You're right, sir, you're right!" he exclaimed.

"Zounds! the drama's dead now! It doesn't live! All the jovial men, writers and actors, are gone, vanished, and there's nobody in their place. The present tom-fools can't walk, talk, or even dress properly!"

"I think they can dress, Sir Harry," commenced old Pop, but a look from Valeria silenced him in time.

The two old men hit it off exactly, for they both belonged to that past which was glorious in their eyes, and both affected to think little of the present.

One day Elfy and Sir Harry were on the south terrace looking at the December sun; Sir Harry was wrapped up and hobbling along on Pop's arm—Pop very tall and proud of his strength.

Elfy heard suddenly the rattle of approaching carriage-wheels, and looking over the hedge, saw a dog-cart coming down the avenue.

A glance told her who was driving it, and the blood rushed to her cheeks and then out of them.

She looked at the old men; neither of them had seen or heard anything.

What should she do?

Terry had come unexpectedly, before his time.

Whatever happened, she must prevent a meeting between nephew and uncle before all things were explained.

Telling the old gentlemen she should not be gone long, and that they were to wait until she returned, she ran down the path and round to the front entrance just as Terry drove up.

With an exclamation of delight, he threw the reins to a groom, and ran up the steps to her.

She led him to the library and there for a full minute the lovers gazing did not allow of words, then, with a flushed face and a beating heart, she tried to prepare him for his uncle's presence.

"Terry," she began, "we have got a visitor—"

"Never mind the visitors, darling; tell me about yourself!" he broke in, impetuously. "Have you been well—well and happy? Not quite happy, dearest? Say you have missed me! Just a little."

"Well, just a little," she admitted, blushing. "and I should have done so more but I have made a new friend and he has kept me from thinking so much of you, sir! and who do you think it is?"

"I don't know," said Terry. "How beautiful you are looking, my darling! You make me think

it is summer and the room is full of roses! And how is Valeria—my Lady Ellmere?"

"Hush, you must never call her that! It would make her angry, and me too!"

"How dreadful! I should like to see you angry. I'll call her Lady Ellmere when I see her—"

Elfy put up her tiny hand to stop his mouth.

Naturally he took that hand prisoner, and as he naturally kissed it; of course Miss Elfy tried to tear it away, and equally of course he—being lord and master—took the whole of her prisoner and kissed her.

As he stood, she leaning her pretty head upon his broad chest, a voice outside exclaimed:

"Elfy, Elfy, where are you?" and before she could extricate herself the door opened and Sir Harry hobbled in.

He stopped and stared. Terry, holding Elfy, stared.

Elfy uttered a low cry of apprehension; but there was no need for fear.

With a low cry from the bottom of his sturdy heart the old man sank into a chair.

"Terry! Terry!" he exclaimed. "My boy! my boy!"

In an instant Terry sprang to his side, and, on one knee, had grasped one trembling hand.

The other the old man put before his eyes, into which the tears of love and joy were swelling.

For a minute there was a profound silence, then the old man, still grasping Terry's hand as in a vice, looked up at Elfy who had stole near him, and in a voice in which love and astonishment struggled for predominance gasped:

"And this—who is this?"

"My future wife!" replied Terry, taking Elfy's hand and placing it in the old man's.

Then, for the first time in his life, the old man wept.

"Heaven forgive me!" he cried. "Heaven forgive a wicked old man, and bless you both."

It was all done in a moment, and volumes could not have expressed more than those few simple words.

Reader, you who have so patiently followed the steps of my heroes and heroine, what more can be told of them than you, who have seen their lives and the ways thereof, may surmise?

Virtue, let cynics say what they will, brings its own reward, and surely the kind hearts of the master and mistress of Ellmere and their friends have found their best and truest reward in the days of happiness which shone upon them one and all.

The Christmas that followed close upon that reconciliation won by gentle Elfy was but a foretaste of years of quiet peace and joy, and the bells which ring in the day of peace on earth and good will towards men ring in also to them and theirs a good and joyous picture which the best and most fortunate of us might envy.

There at Ellmere Castle is room and to spare for them all, and Sir Harry, with his nephew and niece—it is hard to tell which he loves the best—spends many a happy month of the days which are left to him.

There also, beloved of the children to whom he is at once playfellow, guardian and friend, is old Pop.

Carry Street knows him no more, but he still delights to quote his old friends, and no one tires of "Alonso the Brave" or the "Pirate of the Orinoco!"

Yes, the old castle walls echo to children's voices and children's laughter now, and in that happy echo let those last words mingle and die away!

THE END.

OLD LADIES.

A PLEASANT, cheerful, lively, generous, charitable-minded woman is never old. Her heart is as young at sixty or seventy as it was at eighteen or twenty; and they who are old at sixty or seventy are not made old by time.

They are made old by the ravages of passions and feelings of an unsocial and ungovernable nature, which have cankered their minds, wrinkled their spirits, and withered their souls. They are made old by envy, by jealousy, by hatred, by suspicious, by uncharitable feelings; by slandering, scandalising, ill-bred habits, which, if they avoid, they preserve their youth to the very last, so that the child shall die, as the Scripture says, at a hundred years old.

There are many old women who pride themselves on being eighteen or twenty. They carry all the characteristics of age about them, without even suspecting that they are old women. Nay, they even laugh and sneer, and make themselves merry with

such mirth as malice can enjoy by sarcastic reflections upon the age of others who may sleep in modesty between them and admiration, break down the monopoly of attraction which they have enjoyed for a season, either in imagination or reality.

Pride is an old passion, and vanity is grey as the mountains. They are old women that have much of either. They are dry, dull, cold, indifferent. They want the well-spring of youthful affection, which is always cheerful, always active, always engaged in some labour of love which is calculated to promote and distribute enjoyment. Old women, old lady, old grim face, old grins, or any other nickname with the epithet old prefixed to it, is as commonly applied by children to bad-tempered mothers, nurses, or aunts as pretty, kind, sweet, dear, and other youthful epithets are instinctively applied to the good-humoured grandmas with her wrinkled face.

There is an old age of the heart, which is possessed by many who have no suspicion that there is anything old about them; and there is a youth which never grows old, a Love who is ever a boy, a Psyche who is ever a girl. R. W.

A TERRIBLE TRIAL;

OR,

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XV.

It was bright, moonlight night, and very mild and warm for May. The streets of the great metropolis were thronged with people, out to enjoy the radiant loveliness of the evening and to inhale the first gentle breeze of the season, laden with warmth and sweetness from the sunny South.

Rose Foster, standing at her window in the little sitting-room, gazed out upon the expanse of roofs and brick walls, which to her looked dull and cold under the silvery light, and sighed complainingly.

"What's the matter now?" queried her mother, entering from her room, attired for a walk.

"Nothing more than usual. I'm lonely, and always shall be, I suppose. I wish we had a front-room—I've looked at these old walls till I'm weary of them. Oh, dear! what a miserable life this is! Where are you going?" she concluded, with a woe-begone look, highly ludicrous.

"To Mrs. Toombly's house. Don't you want to go?"

"Plague take Mrs. Toombly! she's a regular old gossip—I hate her! I'm going to bed and to sleep, if I can. It's the only pleasure I have."

"Well, go ahead! you'll sleep till you're better natured, I hope, if it's month!" And Mrs. Foster hurried from the room, and slammed the door after her.

Rose dropped into a chair, folded her arms, fixed her eyes on the wall, and made careful preparations to render herself as miserable as possible. A few glances over her past life—a fear that she had lost Oswald Loring—soon accomplished this, and she felt as hateful as only a selfish woman can.

A half-hour might have passed, and her features were twisted and distorted into an expression of utter discontent, when a knock sounded upon the door. Spitefully kicking her chair from under her, she arose and answered the summons.

"Why, Mr. Loring, I'm so glad to see you!" exclaimed Rose, a brilliant smile chasing the clouds from her countenance. "I was so lonely I had resolved to retire. Do come in."

"Thanks. I can only stop a few minutes," he replied, as he entered.

"I think you're very provoking," she pouted. "I was just congratulating myself on having a nice long call from you, and now you're going right off again. I suppose you won't sit down a minute?"

"No, not a minute," laughed Oswald, pleased at her interest in his movements.

Rose dropped her eyes, and played reflectively with the corner of her apron.

"I came to ask you, Miss Rose, if you would like to take a walk with me? It is a beautiful evening—much like summer."

She looked up with a warm, grateful flush on her face, and replied, quickly.

"Oh, I shall be delighted! and how kind of you to ask me. I'll be ready in just one minute—only one."

She laughed gaily, and, excusing herself, ran into the other room.

Oswald gazed after her admiringly, for her vivacity, so fresh and girlish, had a peculiar charm for him, and yet it appealed more to his senses than his heart.

He would not have dared at that moment to compare her with Leonia; the very fact of the comparison suggesting itself to his mind oppressed him.

The re-entrance of Rose relieved him, and her eyes, flashing so merrily under her little hat with its soft plume, and her really fine form seeming more symmetrical in its acquire of rich maroon velvet, caused him to forget his thoughts of a moment before.

"Mother will be surprised when she comes home and finds me gone," said Rose, blithely. "She thought I was going to bed. There, stop outside, please, and let me lock the door. There, the old key is under the mat! now you may hurry as fast as you please, sir."

Laughing lightly, Oswald stepped aside for her to descend the stairs, and followed her very carefully, lest he should step on her dress.

"It will do you good to take the air; you are shut up too much, I think," Oswald said, when they had reached the street.

She smiled feebly, and dropped her eyes, as if a reference to her life was painful. Moments passed in silence, during which they advanced some distance towards the river. Recovering her cheerfulness, she glanced toward it and said:

"How lovely the water looks—just like a rippled glacier! Everybody makes fun of the moonlight, but I think it makes beautiful nature doubly beautiful!"

"Are you always thus poetical?" he asked, somewhat sarcastically.

Rose did not answer at once, and Oswald feared that he had either offended her or wounded her feelings. Presently she referred to a boat upon the river, and he knew by her voice that she had cared nothing for his words. This piqued him a little, but his voice betrayed nothing of the sort as he replied, in a confidential way, and they rolled on, pleasantly conversing.

"Oh, I'm enjoying this so much!" exclaimed Rose as they entered a district quite rural in many respects. "And now we are in the country! Isn't the air delightful? and then the pleasure of seeing a green field and hearing the grasshoppers! I'm so glad you didn't go the other way! I was afraid you would."

And she glanced shyly toward him, laughing lowly.

"I like this way better, too. It seems our tastes are similar."

She dropped her eyes again under his ardent glance, and twirled the fastenings of her glove confusedly.

They now came upon a piece of road flanked on each side by tall trees, through the leaves of which the moonbeams sparkled, forming a mosaic of silver and emerald.

"Isn't this a spot to dream in?" said Rose, meditatively. "The effect of the light is glorious—yes, sublime. Oh, Mr. Loring! I'd give ten years of my life to be a poet for one year. But you think it's foolish, I suppose."

"No, Rose—I like you better for it. It shows a tender, impressive nature," he rejoined, earnestly.

"Anything else," she said, superciliously.

"Yes, more than you think," he responded, turning his fervent gaze full upon her. "I love you, Rose—only I love you."

"And you insult me by telling me so!" she ejaculated, shrinking back and regarding him with dilated eyes, burning eyes and curved lip.

"What can you mean?" he retorted, not a little disturbed. "This is not the language which woman usually applies to a proposal like this."

She covered her face with her hands and burst into tears.

Regretting his words, he continued, gently:

"Rose, dear Rose, explain, I pray you! I offer you my heart—it is all yours!"

"And all this time you are engaged to Mrs. Milton! What am I to think?" she sobbed, resentfully.

"I am not engaged to any living being! I love only you. Oh, Rose, answer me kindly, at least."

"Is it possible—is it true?" she said, dreamily, removing her hands and looking at him with hopeful wonder, the tears still trembling on her long lashes.

"Oh, my darling, can you doubt me?" he rejoined, passionately, slipping his left arm about her waist and regarding her imploringly. "Tell me, Rose, do you love me?"

"Yes," she murmured, a crimson flush overspreading her face.

He pressed her hand and gazed ardently upon her, saying, lowly:

"The scene is indeed beautiful now, dearest."

"Oh, Oswald, it is all so strange!"

And then they conversed in softened tones until they had returned to the little house whence they had started. Then, as Oswald bade her good-night in his entry, he folded her to his heart and kissed her,

thinking himself the happiest of men. And she said in her sweetest way:

"Good-night, dear Oswald!"

CHAPTER XVI.

WEARY from the day's exertions, and yet resolved to push on until they had put a safe distance between themselves and the Great International Exhibition, the boys travelled over the lonely road until they had left the town some eight miles in the rear. Then they sat down by the roadside a few moments and indulged in a short sleep, one remaining awake to rouse the other at the expiration of his time, which was computed by counting sixty until four minutes were deemed to have passed. Singularly enough, neither slept at his post, and, feeling slightly refreshed, they arose and continued their journey.

"Now, Jack, tell me how you got away," said Bob, feeling that his companion was getting asleep while walking, for it was so dark that he could not see him.

"Oh, the bottle, you know," mumbled Jack, rubbing his eyes. "I was most asleep, I think. Hang it, I'm tired. Let me see, Benket and the others were playing cards in the fat woman's tent, and lucky for me, they let me stay up. Well, they wanted whiskey punch, and they did not want to stop make it, so I offered to, and they let me. When I went out after the water, I put just enough in for four drinks, and then put in forty drops of that stuff in the bottle. They growled because I didn't make more, and told me to fill her up again. I did it, and when I came back they were all nodding and swearing at each other in a thick, funny way. I thought I wouldn't go in, but stood watching them at the door, and pretty soon they all fell asleep. Then I cleared out—that's all. I wonder what time 'tis, Bob?"

"It seems to me it must be near morning, but it's so awful dark nobody can tell."

Jack yawned, and began slapping his sides, to enable him to keep awake, while Bob whistled lowly and tried to forget his weariness in the precious thought that freedom was once more within his grasp. At length the gloom gradually vanished, and the gray light of morn appeared.

"It's no use, Bob; I can't stand this any longer," said Jack. "I must lay down. I'm just played out."

"Hold on a minute—I hear wheels. We were caught by sleeping the last time, you know. You get over that wall, and I'll see who's coming."

Jack obeyed, and Bob walked to the opposite side of the road, and glanced in the direction from which the sound proceeded. Presently he saw a countryman with a double team, and as the man drew nearer Bob beheld a cage in the waggon, containing four calves. Calling Jack from his place of concealment, Bob waved his hand to the man, and begged the privilege of riding for himself and friend.

"Whee! whee, Nance! so now! You want to ride, eh, youngster?" said the man, as he drew up. "Well, I dunno; I can't see why you're out here, any way. You think that ain't any of my business, perhaps. I dunno as 'tis. I suppose you're all right, though—jump in."

Eagerly the boys clambered into the vehicle and lay down on the floor, much to the surprise of the driver, who told them to sit with him on the seat. But ascertaining that they had been out all night, he threw them a rug, and pulled the calf-pen farther forward, thus giving them room to lie side by side. In an instant they were both asleep.

Occasionally as they proceeded, the driver turned around, and gazed upon the two young faces, still with the impulse of slumber, and thought of his own boys, and wondered who these little waifs could be.

The sun arose amid a bank of clouds, and the day promised to be heavy and rainy. The forenoon was far advanced ere the boys awoke, and then Bob started up, consulted with Jack, and they concluded that they had better get out, and continue on foot taking a circuitous route that opportunely presented itself, for they had no doubt that men had already started in quest of them. Throwing the man for his kindness, they alighted, and proceeded on their way. At noon the sun came out warm and bright, and in addition to fatigue the boys began to feel the pangs of hunger.

Bob disliked to beg food, but Jack, who was more practical and less proud, stated his intention of pausing at the next house, and asking for dinner. The "next house" proved to be some two miles distant, and when they reached it they were driven from its portal with hard words and threats to let the dog loose.

Jack was very angry at this inhuman treatment, and proposed breaking the windows with stones, but Bob restrained him, and remarked, philosophically,



[UNDER THE SPELL.]

that one couldn't expect goodness in everybody. Silenced but not satisfied, Jack plodded on, with his head down and his hands in his pockets. Slowly the hours dragged on; clouds obscured the sun, and soon the rain came pattering down in big drops, and finally settled into a steady shower.

"There ain't much fun in this, Bob; we're having mighty poor luck this time. Let's go into the next wood we come to and get under the trees or we shall be soaked through."

Bob acquiesced, and, increasing their speed, the boys directed their steps towards a wood on the left about half a mile distant.

Reaching the spot, they went under the leafy shelter, and, having nothing to eat, they resolved to take advantage of the opportunity to sleep. The trees being close together and the foliage very dense, the rain troubled them but little, and they were soon heavily slumbering.

Bob awoke first and found himself in utter darkness. The rain has ceased falling, and now the wind sighed mournfully through the trees.

Suddenly he saw a bright light flashed up in the centre of the forest and as quickly die out. At first he thought it an illusion, then he believed it to be a dark lantern in the hands of a pursuer, and accordingly waited in suspense for the sounds of approaching feet, but this conjecture proving wrong, he became perplexed and aroused Jack.

"That young man, having heard his friend's story, contemptuously called it a dream, and was about nestling down to the leaves again when a crimson flash lit up the wood for several feet around.

"Believe it now, won't you?" said Bob, somewhat resentfully.

"Yes. What in the name of Old Scratch is it?" replied Jack, slowly, and in a voice tinged with superstition.

"I'll tell you what I think it is. It looks a good deal like one of old Golgus's tricks. Some of his crowd may have come upon us while we slept and now burn something to frighten us, but it'll take more than a red light to frighten me. Pick up a stick, Jack; there's plenty of 'em around here."

Reassured by his companion's firmness, Jack echoed his sentiments, and, having stumbled upon a stick, he grasped it and announced himself ready to follow his friend anywhere.

"I think we'd better get out of this wood," said Bob. "I don't purpose to attack anybody, but I want to be able to defend myself. Come."

"Stop!" sounded a strange voice from behind a tree, and again that weird glare illumined the forest.

"Oh, murder!" panted Jack, drawing nearer to his companion.

"Don't be an idiot, Jack," said Bob, irritably. "We never heard the voice before; it's none of the Golgus crew. I want to find what the light is."

"Come over here, then," was the reply from the darkness.

"No, you come to us, and prove yourself a friend first. You can't catch us with salt," said Bob.

A breaking of twigs and a snuffling among the leaves announced that the stranger was doing his best to comply, and presently the flame of a match revealed him standing between two trees—a rather short, square-built man, with a coarse face, not quite pale, and long dark hair.

His clothes were torn, and his every attribute declared him a fugitive or a ruffian.

"I don't like your looks," said Bob, frankly, "I think we can be as happy away from you."

"I tell ye I'm yer friend, an' I'll prove it. I know how I look, but I can't help that. Here, here is my revolver—it's loaded, too, and the first move I make to hurt you just put every bullet through me."

He struck another match, took the pistol from his pocket and handed it to Bob. The latter accepted it as a precautionary measure, and then asked him coolly if he hadn't another for Jack. The man reiterated his statements with forcible sincerity, and Bob, thinking that if he should discover foul play, that he could defend himself, now consented to follow. Jack was rather averse to any farther intimacy with the goolin of the forest, but he could not separate from Bob, so he blundered on in the darkness, and shortly the mystic light was again perceptible.

Upon drawing nearer the boys beheld a natural cave, or cavity, lined with rocks, and large enough to seat four or five men, so that their heads would be level with the ground. In the centre of this stony vault the man had built a fire, and the flames of this, leaping up at intervals, had caused the illusion which Jack was at first inclined to think belonged to the supernatural.

"Sit down an' be comfortable," said their singular host, stretching his limbs around the blaze. "I don't blame ye for being shy—I'm shy of myself. But perhaps ye're hungry. Ye look so. I'll alter that."

Arising, he drew his knife from his pocket and stuck it into the ground at the left of the cavity. The blade struck something metallic, and then the man drew it out and began to dig with his fingers. The boys looked on in wonder. Presently he unearthed a

tin box, from which he took a slice of steak. This he flung upon the fire, and then having rubbed the dirt off his hands, he unrolled a piece of canvas, and extracted therefrom several ship biscuits, which he placed on the rock, and then turned the steak with his knife.

"It's like a fairy story, ain't it Bob?" whispered Jack.

Bob made no reply; he was watching their new acquaintance.

Taking the meat from the fire, the man cut it into three pieces and gave his guests one each, reserving the third for himself.

Seeing that neither of the boys partook of his bounty, he said:

"Why don't you eat?"

"Eat yourself first, if you expect us to believe that you are our friend," rejoined Bob, with his usual caution.

"You're a sharp 'un—yer thought it might be poisoned, eh? Well, it ain't—see here," and he took an enormous bite, and disposed of it with evident relish.

Bob waited until he had swallowed it, and then, satisfied that it was pure, he ate his own portion, and it tasted better than any of Madge's elegant suppers, for he was thoroughly hungry.

The sylvan repast being over, the host lighted his pipe, and after smoking a few minutes said:

"Didn't I hear you say something about Golgus?"

"Yes," answered Bob, wondering what interest his questioner could have in the name.

"Where is he?"

"I don't know; but his citous is not far from here."

"So near!" said the man, taking his pipe from his mouth and contracting his brows.

"Do you know him?" inquired Bob, becoming interested.

"Know him! yes! I was one of his imps once—one of his tools! I know you, boy, too—know more of you than you know of yourself!" he ejaculated, bringing his fist down upon his knee and grating his teeth.

His vehemence, the look of ferocious hate that overspread his features, taken with his closing words, caused Bob to think that he meant some injury to him, and, drawing the revolver, the boy firmly said:

"Remember your own words! If you move nearer to me, I will shoot you!"

(To be continued.)



[DR. ELLIOT'S PATIENT.]

THE BARONET'S SON;

OR,
LOVE AND HATE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Winifred Wynne," "One Sparkle of Gold," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
Left in that dreadful hour alone;
Perchance her reason stoops or reels:
Perchance a courage not her own
Braces her mind to desperate tone.

Oh, life, without thy chequered scene
Of right and wrong, of weal and woe,
Success and failure, could a ground
For magnanimity be found,
For faith 'mid ruined hopes serene,
Or whence could virtue flow?
Pain entered through a chaste breach,
Nor while sin lasts must evils cease!
Mercy has placed within our reach
A portion of heaven's peace.

"If you please, sir, a young person wishes to see you," announced the hall servant of Dr. Elliot, just at the conclusion of the morning's reception, which had been a more than usually numerous one, even for the successful physician who was the family doctor of Mr. Joseph Bradley.

There was therefore some excuse for the gesture of impatience and the rather unprofessional. "What the deuce does she want? Hasn't she a name?" that issued from the doctor's lips.

But Saunders was too well acquainted with the kindly heart and brusque manner of his master to be affected by this burst of indignation.

"Can't say, sir; but she's young and in black, with a veil, and quite like a lady, and she's got a very sweet, sad voice. I think she's in trouble, and perhaps she's the relative of some one you've assisted, sir."

"That's a wide address any way—young girl in trouble," said the doctor, in a mollified tone; "but, there, I suppose you'll give me no peace. Let the girl in, but tell her I'm in a hurry and she mustn't take up much time in chattering."

Saunders retired and in a few minutes returned with a slight, tall girl, in black, as he had described the visitor, and closed the door behind him as if to ensure her entire admittance to his master's presence.

"Well, what is it?" exclaimed the doctor, in a voice not altogether so rough as his words, for the air and courtesy of the young girl assured him that his servant had not mistaken in her being a lady. "Please to come to the point, as my time is precious, young lady."

"You have a patient called Vandeleur on your list, I think," replied a voice so sweet and clear that it went far to carry any request made by the fair owner. "Yes; what of him? Is he connected with you in any way?" replied Dr. Elliot.

"I heard he was very ill, and that you wanted a nurse for him. I am come to offer to take the place," returned the girl.

"A very cool and very silly request," returned the physician, impatiently. "Mr. Vandeleur has a very infectious disease, and he requires skilful nursing. Have you any certificates or recommendations? If not, it would be quite useless to even consider the request."

The girl paused for a moment; but there was a suspicious movement in the doctor's foot that made her dread a dismissal without any farther appeal.

"I am not afraid; I will carry out every direction punctually. I know I can satisfy you, and I must—indeed, I must!" she said, clasping her hands together tightly.

"Why, what is all this?" he returned, angrily. "Do you know, young woman, that my patient was taken ill at the church on his wedding morning, and that he is engaged still, of course, to be married immediately on his recovery? If there is any other engagement going on I should be the last to consent to bring you in contact with him. I cannot believe however, that you would dare to come to me on such an errand!"

The young lady suddenly threw up her veil, as if to permit her companion a clearer view of her lovely face, all glowing with an angry flush, which yet faded away instantly as she replied:

"You are unjust, sir—but I forget; you can but judge me as it appears. I have the right of affection and deep anxiety to nurse Mr. Vandeleur; but not of the kind you suppose. Let me go to him as a nurse, that no one but yourself may suspect I am more than a mere nursing sister tending him."

Dr. Elliot felt that she was speaking truth. There was no tinge of embarrassment or shame in her sweet, sad features, and it might be that a suspicion of the truth did cross his mind.

"Harkye, young woman," he said. "Perhaps I have some notion of what is the actual state of the case; but it may be better on all accounts that I should not absolutely be informed of your identity. But still I feel considerable hesitation in allowing such a risk, especially without the sanction of your relatives and friends. Has Mr. Vandeleur no father or mother?" he continued, with a significant glance and nod.

"He has no one to interest themselves in him except me, and I am resolved not to desert him at whatever peril," she replied, firmly.

Dr. Elliot rapidly reviewed the whole features of the remarkable occurrence in which he had become involved.

The strange fancy that could induce a man like Joseph Bradley to give his daughter with such cost and brilliancy to a mere solitary and friendless tutor and the equally unusual result to the suffering bridegroom were in themselves grounds for speculation.

But now, when the chosen son-in-law was almost deserted by the family into which he was about to marry, and left to the care of strangers whether he lived or died, the affair assumed a still stranger aspect; and now this fair and evidently well born and nurtured young creature appeared on the scene to add to its complications and give rise to grave suspicions and doubts.

"It is a heavy responsibility," he said, deliberately. "First, I must take your word that there is nothing whatever in your position nor your feelings to make it improper for you to enter the house of Mr. Vandeleur's betrothed bride."

"Nothing—nothing; I speak simple truth—indeed it is true!" responded the girl, firmly.

The physician regarded the young girl steadily for a brief space, but the object of his scrutiny did not in the least falter or exhibit any sign or expression which could by the most acute or unfriendly nature be construed into guilt or consciousness of falsehood.

Obviously satisfied with the result of his searching examination the doctor took his eyes from the beautiful, frank face before him and resumed, in a gentler voice and with a kinder and less brusque manner than he had hitherto employed:

"Granted. I do believe you, young lady, and if

you deceive me I shall never trust any one again," continued the doctor. "But, next, how am I to know your abilities and courage, or that I am not simply committing murder by placing you in the infected den?"

"If you are not satisfied with me in a very little time I will go," she said, quickly. "And as to infection, there would be little grief anywhere if I died. But that is nothing," she resumed, hastily. "I only mean that I have no reason to be afraid even for the sake of others, and I do implore you to give me one trial—only one!"

"Humph! You are very likely not to have more," was the gruff reply, for Dr. Elliot was sufficiently moved to desire to conceal his feelings. "However, a wilful woman must have her way, I suppose, and if you will implicitly obey me I will see what can be done to prevent any mischief. First, you shall have a good lunch here, and then you shall go with me in my carriage to the house, calling on the way for a suitable garb to make you look as ugly and old as possible. There, stay here, and I'll give all necessary orders."

And, without giving time for any thanks or hesitation on the girl's part, Dr. Elliot retired.

And Gladys Vandeleur, for it was she, thanked Heaven for her success, as the next boon to the recovery of her beloved and injured brother. She could scarcely have realized that she could have felt such relief while Oscar was still in danger and exile and perhaps sigh unto death.

"Is Mr. Vandeleur any better?" asked Dr. Elliot as he entered the new deserted mansion of the Bradleys. "Not a bit, sir; worse I should say, but of course we keep out of his way as much as we can," replied the porter. "And I've an idea that the old woman who is put there to watch him don't always to the fore, for what can one expect of a helpless old body who was nurse to the young folks and is now getting past it to my thinking, doctor?"

"Exactly so, and I have another nurse to help her," replied the physician, while Gladys came eagerly and yet shrinkingly on the scene. "So you'll be quite happy now, Benson, and I hope you will see that every care and attention are paid to the new nurse, for the duties will be pretty heavy, I can tell you."

And, without farther parley, Dr. Elliot led the way to the sick-chamber.

Gladys followed with unflinching and firm steps. She was too eager to assume her duties to falter in her progress, and besides all must depend on the amount of self-control and courage she displayed for the continuance in her tasks.

And now, when the door opened and she could hear the familiar tones, all sharpened as they were by delirium, and giving utterance to wild and untelligible fancies, she still went calmly on.

Dr. Elliot signed to her to close the door, and then he advanced to the bedside and commenced the daily examination of the patient's symptoms that seemed only to give cause for deeper and more hopeless disquiet.

"I have brought you another nurse; we will hope to get you well, as she is very clever, I believe," said the physician, after the brief review of the sufferer's progress to the inevitable crisis.

There was a momentary glitter in the wild and feverish eyes.

"Who is she? Not her—not her. It burns my brain when her name comes in my head. I won't let her come near, I won't, I tell you," saved the unhappy patient.

"She is one who will make your poor head cool," said the physician, with an irresistible pity in his tone. "Look at her; see how quiet and sad she looks—will that please you, my young sir?"

He led Gladys forward, and she bravely bore herself in the trial.

Calm and still she stood, with a gentle, soft smile on her lips, and yet a moisture in her eye that was far more like tears of sympathy than a smile of gladness.

"I will try to make you well if you will let me," she said, in her low, clear tones. "And I believe your head will get cool by degrees if you will trust me."

"Trust—trust!" He shuddered as he pronounced the word. "No, no, never; I have been too cruelly deceived and wronged."

But the moment after the strange flash of sense and rational impression seemed to merge in the wild fancies of fever, and she rambled off once more:

"Yes, yes, perhaps—I will see—and you look young and pretty; not like the old woman; yes, come—it can't be worse, worse! I had better die in peace!"

Then a sort of stupor gradually calmed his irritation, and Dr. Elliot led Gladys from the couch.

"You must attend most carefully to all the treatment," he said, "which I will explain to you directly, and besides which I shall arrange for you to have necessary nourishment and air every day. It will be at least ten days before the crisis comes, and therefore it will be necessary to husband your strength. Now listen."

He enumerated the various directions that it would be necessary to observe, and treatment to meet, so far as possible, every probable and sudden emergency, and then took his leave, with a lingering regret that one so young and lovely and, as he felt certain, high born, should be exposed to the terrible danger into which that young creature had thrown herself.

But Dr. Elliot had too many and valued subjects of anxiety for him to dwell long on this perplexing and remarkable case, and on he rushed, his next patient, a young nurse and the baronet's son had passed into the less vivid region of diminished thoughts.

Gladys was alone at last with that beloved and much injured brother.

At last she could gaze on the lineaments so changed and disfigured by agony and dissipation and the last fearful trials of body and mind that had vanquished even the utmost endurance and powers of youth and vigour and determined will.

She could figure to herself all that he must have suffered to have made him such a wreck, and her tears flowed silently for his griefs and his errors too.

And even to her gentle spirit the indignation that fired her at the memory of the original cause of this misery was perhaps an even better stimulant than her utmost unaided efforts could have accomplished.

Where were those who ought to have been round that invalid bed?—where was the author of the very existence that was now in such peril?—where was Wanda, the sister who had the same kindred to him as herself? and Edith, whom he worshipped with hopeless and now an almost fanatical love?

None heeded the lonely sufferer.

The gay and splendid revels that were going on at the Casino were occupying their whole minds and animating their spirits.

Would his death startle them from this whirl of pleasant unmindfulness of aught but happiness and mirth?

Gladys was scarcely aware herself that there was one name that was not included in this category and one in whose good faith her reliance remained unshaken and secure.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"OCEIL, my son, it is time you should have some more clear and accurate idea of my real position and your future prospects," said Lord Delmore, on the evening before the brilliant fêtes that were to include both rich and poor in their varied programme. "You are about to be presented to my friends and tenants as the future Earl Delmore—the prospective master of the estates of the Dupuys. It would be a sad farce were these prospects to explode—these hopes to burst like bubbles, eh, Cecil?"

Lord Dupuy was by no means in the habit of betraying surprise, either by gesture or word, but he certainly did speak a muttered phrase between his teeth that was very seldom indulged in by his calm, philosophical temperament and which was certainly neither decorous in itself nor adapted for "ears polite"—especially when the said ears were those of a respectable nobleman in a parental relation to the speaker.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he hastily corrected himself; "but really you must be indulging in practical jokes or else announcing very serious matters very lightly and suddenly. Do you mean that I may very likely not outlive you, my lord, and thus blast the hopes of my admiring friends and dependents to untimely grief? Is that what you mean?" he continued, half-impatiently, for he found little encouragement in the serious face and half-appealing air of his father to assume the more agreeable interpretation of the problem.

"No, Cecil, certainly not," said Lord Delmore, more decidedly. "I have no reason on earth to think that a constitution that has stood all the trials to which you have exposed yours will give way before my thin, spare frame. But, to speak plainly, there are circumstances that, if not foreseen and guarded against, will make the succession to our family estates a mere mockery. Cecil, the whole property is deeply and permanently involved and only one way is left of saving it from destruction."

Lord Dupuy stared at his father as if he believed his brain must be affected by some temporary cause.

"I really cannot, excuse me, quite believe all this," he said, with some involuntary sternness in his tone.

"Pardon me, my father, but I think we had better postpone this discussion till some more fitting opportunity."

"No, Cecil, no, you are mistaken. I have not been drinking, neither is my brain excited, except by the effort it costs me to tell what I have hitherto kept in my own breast," replied the earl, in a tone of melancholy reproach. "And I will soon explain to you for what reason I have chosen this night as the time to explain myself."

"Are you ready to listen, Cecil, to a brief but accurate account of the causes and the result that has been so disastrous to my life, and which threaten yours, if you will not be reasonable and dole to the suggestions I have to make for the remedy?"

"I will not interrupt you, sir. It is not my way to indulge in over loquacity," replied Cecil, with a bitterness that was very foreign to his nature, but which might well be accounted for by the extreme suddenness of what seemed to be a most gratuitously blundered revelation.

"I will not tax your reticence more than I can help, Cecil," retorted his father, with some dignity. "But some details must be entered into to make my meaning clear."

"My father died rather suddenly when I was not quite so old as you are now, and I learnt then the unsuspected truth that the rent-roll that seemed so prosperous and so ample was really a delusion, and that mortgage on mortgage had been advanced till at last there was barely enough to pay the interest and to enable the owner to live with tolerable decency as a nobleman, to say nothing of any possibility of the usual indulgence of his rank."

"There had been recklessness and gambling and I know not what to account for the miserable state of affairs; but I cannot blame now what was the cause. Such was the miserable result. Well, Cecil, my first trial was to see that you will smile at when it is related by a grey-haired man, but it has in a measure coloured more lives than one or two by its influence."

"You mean in the way of marriage, I suppose?" said Cecil, quietly. "I imagined something of the kind."

"Yes, I relinquished at once the woman I loved, whom I never really ceased to love, and I, after a time, married your mother, and she was a true and good wife to me, so long as her life was spared. But it was only an insufficient remedy for the evil. Her fortune was not ample enough to do more than bridge over the gap; it could not fill up the abyss."

"And now, to bring matters to a crisis, the holder of the chief mortgage, who is or rather has been a minor, is just coming of age, and the affairs that have been left precisely in the condition which his father's will decreed should be the case during the minority will be looked into, and I am decidedly of opinion will be entirely altered and wound up."

"This is the simple state of matters, my son. And, as I tell you, the burdens on the property must be cleared off—or shifted, which I can scarcely hope will be possible; and even then the miserable pittance that will be left is a simple disgrace for the Earl Delmore to live on. Cecil, what is your feeling? would you not make a great and even painful effort to avert this?"

Lord Dupuy had recovered his self-possession now.

He had listened almost with an unmoved look as well as motionless figure to his father's words, and it would have been impossible for the most practised to have detected the impression that they made on him.

His usual expression was so grave and so much under command that a shade more or less of gloom was less remarkable than in a more mobile and joyous cast of features.

"It depends on what the effort is, my dear father," he replied, calmly. "There are actions which are incompatible with my ideas of honour and which I would rather face the most ghastly ruin than degrade myself by committing."

Lord Delmore cleared his throat and blushed in the chair where he had hitherto sat well nigh motionless, as if too absorbed in the magnitude of the subject for any irritability of gesture or even the natural embarrassment of his task.

"Cecil, I hope you do not understand me and that your words are not pointed to that meaning. It would be a terrible blow—ay, a crushing death-blow to me, were you to be obstinate in your refusal."

"Let us understand each other, my father," was the quick, sharp reply. "It is no use beating round the bush. How am I to get you out of the difficulty, or rather, I suppose, I should say as, since Edith and I are in the same play?" he added, with a cynical smile.

"Thank Heaven! I hope your sister is safe, and

that is my chief consolation, Cecil," returned the earl, eagerly. "You must have perceived that Prince Claude de Loriane is most assiduously paying court to Edith, and she has all but promised me that she will consent to be his bride in a reasonable time. So far it will relieve me of one fearful anxiety, which she only partially suspects to exist. But still the one great terror remains, Cecil, and unless you will be as considerate and obedient as your sister, I see no possible remedy for the ruin that menaces the name and the honour of our house."

"You mean, I suppose, by my marrying some millionaire's daughter, with gold and bank-notes and bonds tacked to every inch of her skirts on the wedding-day. Is that it, sir?" asked Lord Dupuy, in a kind of asperged and sarcastic tone that boded ill for his father's success.

"Yes, Cecil, I do," returned the earl, firmly, "and there can be no other possible escape. I have hoped and thought and planned so as to avert this, but in vain. It must be my son, or I dare not even contemplate the alternative."

"And have you arranged the lady as well as the marriage, or am I to look out or advertise?" asked Cecil, bitterly.

Lord Delmore did not appear to notice the sarcasm of his son's manner, but replied, in a calm tone, as if the affair was one of the most ordinary arrangements.

"Yes, Cecil, I do know of one who will, as I hope, and believe, be a wife most eligible in all respects for you—one who is young, and of similar tastes to your own, and who certainly has quite good looks enough not to be in the least a drawback to her other gifts. In one word, it is the daughter of Sir Lewis Vandeleur."

Lord Dupuy bowed his head, as his father hoped, in token of assent, but a few moments disabused him of the desired impression.

"Sir Lewis has two daughters, you may have remarked, my lord. Which of them is the one you have selected?" he said, coldly, "and how is it that she can possess such a fortune as can retrieve our ruin? The estates are entailed on Oscar, and the girls will, I suppose, share equal fortunes. I cannot even now see the force of the argument in this case."

Lord Delmore winced in most evident and very humiliating embarrassment.

"You have not much confidence in my judgment or common sense, Cecil, or you would not have thought it necessary to point all this out to my inferior capacity, humble as it may be. To answer your questions in some regular fashion, however, I must explain thus much: Wenna Vandeleur is her father's favourite—I may say his only loved child. He will give her the very fortune that he has at his disposal, and, in short, I have every reason to believe that her wealth will be more than adequate to our need."

Cecil's eyes were fixed almost sternly on his father as he spoke, but when the earl finished the tone of his answer was withering in its scorn. "FATHER, is it possible that I comprehended you aright?" he said, in a low tone, as if he dared not give way to the wrath that would have vented itself in a very storm of indignant passion. "Would you lend yourself to the iniquitous schemes of an unnatural parent? Would you let the son, ay, and the helpless daughter of your dead kinswoman be sacrificed to taste and direct injustice like this? Is that the mode to save honour and so preserve the name of Dupuy from stain and disgrace? Why, the foul blot would never be effaced, and the curse would never be removed from our race," he went on, sternly, his clenched hand descending on the table, where he sat, as if to relieve his suppressed passion by some physical outburst of rage.

Lord Delmore waved his hand deprecatingly, albeit that he was startled by such unwonted excitement on the part of his self-controlled son. "Listen, Cecil," he said, "and do not be so rash. No doubt he has been most violently and strangely prejudiced against Oscar; but I greatly fear that he was better acquainted with his son's nature than those who blamed his prejudice in taking so unenviable an aversion. I understand that the unfortunate fellow is sinking deeper and deeper, instead of rising as he professed his wish to do, and that he has at last been forced to adopt the most disgraceful means of relieving himself from the open and public edicts that is hanging over him."

"By the same expedient that you propose to use, is that it, my lord?" said Cecil. "I quite agree with you in its humiliations."

"Alas, Cecil, to compare the positions," said Lord Delmore, impatiently. "As if a reckless, dissipated young man, who is the heir to good and free estates, can be compared to such conduct to the victim of circumstances like yourself! However, so the matter is, and as Sir Lewis is resolved on his line of conduct, and as Wenna is a high-born, and charming girl, I do not see any reason that another should snatch the prize which it is desirable for you to secure. It will rather enable you to assist both Oscar and his equally unmanageable sister, while others would probably leave them to their fate."

"A very good argument if used generally, my lord," said Cecil, sententiously. "A sort of evil that good that good may come, a robbery of wealth gold and jewels compounded by giving part to the Church. Such may be the code of morals among thieves—or, well, I will not go farther. It is enough that I decline to share the spoil."

Lord Dupuy had vainly striven to assume an air of dignified surprise and displeasure while Cecil spoke.

He doubtless prepared a speech of indignant remonstrance at such an interpretation of his scheme for his son's deliverance.

But there was something in Lord Dupuy's countenance, and it might be an unacknowledged power in his words, that broke down all the weapons which his father had deemed so irresistible.

Yet the earl could not so easily yield his long cherished hopes; he could not face the terrible alternative that he was now forced to meet, after long years of determined ignoring of the distant cloud that threatened him.

"Cecil," he said, at last, in a pleading, broken tone, that was far more likely to touch his son's heart than any reproachful threats, "do not let your considerations stop short of your father alone. Remember what you condemn me to—what misery you are bringing on Edith and yourself and me by this strained and strained. Only consider the misery of hearing the sneering comments and the scorn at the fall of the great family who had held such a proud place for many long generations; of giving up the mansion that has been for so many centuries the home of our ancestors; of seeing perhaps even the heirlooms of our race swept away by remorseless hands! Cecil, my son—my only hope, my only support—think of this ere you decide on throwing away our only chance of escape from so great a sorrow that I scarcely think I could face and live."

It was a sore strait for a man as proud and sensitive as Cecil Dupuy.

He was perhaps really more deeply out, more crushingly prostrated by the unexpected news than his more demonstrative father.

But the nerve of his habitual character and the high sense of honour that was a very element of his nature came to his rescue from self-betrayal.

"No, my father, I cannot sacrifice a substance for a shadow," he said, firmly. "I do not say that I would not yield much of my personal happiness and feelings for the considerations you press on me. I might even crush back a cherished affection, as you did in your young days. I might try to find peace and content with a woman less congenial to my tastes than the one of my choice. But I will not be accessory to the spoliation of another's right, the driving an injured man to despair, and then saving myself at his expense, not even for you!"

Lord Delmore bent his head on his clasped hands. He saw that all was hopeless.

He dared not attempt further contest with the stronger and nobler nature of his only son, and his weak despair, his utter distress of mind was more than he could support without betraying his agonized and bitter disappointment.

There were sobs heard in the hushed silence, even if tears did not rise to the long dry and unaccustomed eyes, and the heaving breast let actual groans escape, that sounded like a knell on Cecil's ears.

He paused for a moment to let the agony subside ere he once more spoke.

"Father, be brave; be worthy of our race," he said, with firmness, laying his hand on Lord Delmore's arm. "It is no crime, and we must not degrade our spirits, if we are crushed down by adverse fate, but if we were to place ourselves in the power of any man to point at us with scorn, as the robbers and the abettors of an unnatural wrong we should feel in constant jeopardy, and most fearful weight of humiliation and remorse would haunt us to our last hours. One day you will thank Heaven that you have not yielded to the temptation of that bad, harsh man."

"Then what do you propose? Are you going to abandon all that has been the right and the possessions of your family, Lord Dupuy?" said the earl, in a voice that had as much displeasure as grief in its tone.

"I will try my utmost, father, to avert the evil," he replied, calmly. "So soon as all this 'vain mockery is over,' he went on, with some bitterness, 'I will ask you to give me all the details of our position, and then I can take measures accordingly. I do not even yet despair of saving the old place, even if we are forced to hold it on a very different tenure, I am prepared to make any sacrifice that will per-

sonally fall on myself alone; and, as to you and Edith there are many ways of preventing the blow falling with such heaviness as you fear. Take heart, my lord," he continued, with a smile. "There should be no craven spirit in an Earl Delmore—a long-ascended Dupuy."

There was some infection in the bravery of the firm, noble young spirit, that made itself felt in a measure by his more weak and selfish parent.

"At least you will defer the evil day till all this is over," he said, pleasantly. "It is a needless aggravation to expose our misfortunes to our old enemy, and, besides, to say truth, Cecil, I am in some little measure committed both with him and Prince Claude. Do not make the cup still more bitter by the reckless haste in forcing its contents down our throats," he continued, impatiently.

He had not yet forgiven the firmness, which yet he could not but respect, in the noble independence and honour of his son.

"It matters not, so that no farther steps are taken to plunge us deeper into ruin and disgrace," replied Lord Dupuy, calmly. "It is but a very few days, and then we shall be once more free from this miserable, vain pageantry of birth. Then I will not lose an hour in the task I have set myself."

"And Wenna—you will not show any difference to her? you will not let her or Sir Lewis perceive that you wish to display your disregard of the wishes of her father, and yours?" pleaded the earl, in irresistible gesture of impatience. It was a cowardice that he could not comprehend and decidedly held in utter contempt.

"Be happy on that score, my lord," he said, quickly. "I shall certainly not show any want of attention to a guest of yours. Nor will I compromise you as much as I fear you have committed me in this matter. Now it may be as well to let the matter drop; we can do no good by farther discussion that only irritates the mind. Good night!"

And Cecil held out his hand to his father with an assumed composure that almost deceived the earl as to the reality of his decision.

"Ah, if he take no irrevocable step—if he leave the door open for the escape that is so plain and easy, all may yet be well," was the earl's musing comfort after Cecil had departed. "It is just the enthusiasm and romance of youth, he does not realize the full extent of the misery that awaits us all. A little reflection, a few vain efforts will prove the hopelessness of his ideas, and time may do wonders, if we can but gain time."

Lord Delmore had trusted so long in the chapter of accidents that it was easy for him to persuade himself that even now an unlooked-for change in their prospects might take place.

And his rest that night was decidedly more calm and refreshing than the tardy and broken slumbers of Cecil Dupuy.

"Poor Gladys!" was the last musing reflection of the viscount before he slept. "If I cannot save her from the grief and anxiety that are so bravely borne by her, I will at least bear all rather than add one pang or make the struggle yet more hopeless which she is waging with injustice and cruel wrong. Love shall be as strong and far more lasting than hate. But I must be cautious and wary, or I shall even now add to the misery I would give years of my life to remove."

The festivities of the following day were as successful as the taste and care bestowed on their arrangements could deserve.

The tenants' dinner, the sports held in the large riding-school that was one of the peculiar features of the Castle, and the dancing that commenced before the gentry were forced to retire to prepare for the grand ball in the spacious saloons, went off with all the élan that the occasion deserved.

There had been many heroes and many a high, brave spirit in the Dupuy race since they had been seated in the grand old mansion and reigned over the broad lands that had been won by many a gallant deed, yet perhaps Cecil Dupuy, in his entire and noble self-command, his calm fulfillment of duties that seemed to him such a cruel mockery, and his wonderful mastery over the despair which filled his whole heart in that gay, festive scene, was not quite unworthy of the descent from those brave, gallant spirits whose blood flowed in his veins.

It is nearly over now, and the only thing that remains will be the sneers of the world at this absurd pageantry which covers the dark abyss below," muttered the young man, as he completed his rapid evening toilet and prepared to descend to the saloons. "Let me see. I may as well play out the play to the utmost and let Wenna Vandeleur have her amusement now and her sarcasm then."

He had scarcely formed this resolution too soon, for scarcely had he entered the now crowded saloons

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than the daughter of Sir Lewis appeared, as if by some accident, in the immediate vicinity of the door through which he passed.

She looked certainly an attractive creature in her tasteful dress and her aristocratic bearing, though there was no actual or decided beauty in her features.

Lord Delmore was scarcely so far wrong in declaring that she was a fitting match for one of Cecil's station and the intellectual tastes that had occupied the years usually devoted to the more light and pleasurable pursuits of gaiety; and the proud air that usually marked her whole demeanour was always bewitchingly softened when she turned to Lord Dupuy.

"I feel so dreadfully out of place," she said, appealingly to him, so soon as he appeared. "so please do not be shocked if I ask you to cast your shield before me in all this crowd. You see I am not 'out' yet, so that I have a very hybrid position to fill."

"You need not fear being out of place, Miss Vandeleur," he said, in a cool, half-indifferent style that was perhaps more crushing to any hopes or wishes of the young girl than any actual rudeness could have been.

"I do not know whether you will think it any compliment if I say that you have all the style and reticence of others five years your senior. I do not know why it should be, but there is no doubt of the fact."

Wenna gave a little musical laugh.

"How little you men enter into the feelings of our sex," she said, holding up her pretty hands deprecatingly. "Shall I tell you the real truth, Lord Dupuy? May I really hope that you for once will not misunderstand me when I say that it was from the great dissimilarity between my sister and myself that my preoccupation has arisen? Gladys never loved me, and I was thus thrown on my own resources and placed in a false footing, as I may truly say—Do not be too harsh upon me, Lord Dupuy," she went on, softly.

Cecil might well be somewhat melted by such deference on the part of so gifted and well-born a creature.

"It is not for me to make any comment on you or your arrangements, Miss Vandeleur," he replied, in a more gentle tone than he had yet used to the young sister of Gladys Vandeleur, "only I do believe there is a rapport that seldom falls between those united to each other, and the question is whether your elder sister had no more pressing interest that claimed her love and attention. If you were your father's favourite, it surely was sufficient for your happiness."

"And I was to be left in solitude and neglect on that account," said the girl, in a plaintive tone, "you are very harsh in your judgment, Lord Dupuy. I have a far more bitter sorrow than you imagine in the utter coldness of my brother and sister towards me. I never knew Oscar, save by report, and now that I have heard of his death the truth seems kept from me, and I have no good cause to refuse to be gay and contented at your festivities. Is not that cruel to me? Am I to be expected to show grief at such a terse and forced command?" she added, bitterly.

But Cecil only heard one phrase in the long plaint.

Could it be true that Oscar Vandeleur was dead?

(To be continued.)

THE WHITE ROSE CHIEFTAIN;

OR, THE DISPUTED CROWN.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE brief sway of the Duke of York was marked by caution and clemency, and while exercising the duties of his office which had been proffered by Parliament the protector was careful to have it understood throughout his dominions that he "only followed their noble command." It is true that one of his first acts was to entrust the great seal to the Earl of Salisbury, but on the whole his moderation was conspicuous and the claims of Prince Edward, the son of Henry the Sixth and Margaret of Anjou, having been fully recognized, he was created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester, and a splendid provision made for his maintenance. The recovery of the king, however, threw everything into disorder; the news spread from Thames to Tweed, and from Kent to Northumberland, and the partisans of the Red Rose congratulated themselves on their good fortune.

The Duke of York now resigned his protectorship, not because he believed Henry the less a usurper, but from chivalrous sense of honour, and Margaret of Anjou regained her ascendancy in England. Such was the state of affairs, that if she had displayed in a slight degree the tolerance manifested by Richard of York she might have retained the good opinion of the people; but she seemed to grow more and more revengeful as time moved on.

While the king had lain ill the Earl of Somerset had been arrested and sent to the Tower, a measure which met the warm approval of every subject, as he had incurred the public odium by an utter abuse of his power.

He was now liberated, without being brought to trial for his offences against the country, and appointed Captain General of Calais.

After this outrage the Yorkists became convinced that the sword alone could settle the great controversy, and in the succeeding spring the duke returned to Ludlow, summoned his retainers, and prepared for the war which was inevitable. He was soon joined by the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, John Mowbray, and other cavaliers worthy to be styled White Rose chiefs. York then armed and equipped the marchmen of Wales, and commenced his advance toward the capital.

Somerset immediately assembled a Lancastrian force, and headed by the king in person the army marched from London to meet the Yorkists.

Among the forces then marshalled by the Red Rose were Lord Percy and Jasper de Vere.

Percy's reputation had only been transient, and he and De Vere hated their rival with terrible intensity, and when they at length learned what a stratagem he had employed to gain admittance to Windsor Forest, betrayed the secret to the king.

During the sway of the protector they had retired to their ancestral seats; and when Henry was reinstated and the sky grew black with omens of war they were the first to offer their services to Somerset.

And Valentin Lyndhurst—what of her? The Earl of Beaufort was still living, and though he had not yet consented to an alliance with the House of York he had too much fatherly kindness to wound her by openly expressing his opinion.

The chill winds of March and the fitful sunshine and shadow of April had given place to May, and England was in all her glory.

The grass wore the fresh green of spring-time, the cuckoo-mint, the violet and the daisy anged the fields and banks; the hedgerows were in full bloom, the woods again tossed their leafy branches as if they would fain touch the sky; the young girls gathered watercresses in their brown braids, and sun-brown lads went—

To call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee.

It was at the pleasant hour of the gloaming that Valentin might have been seen wandering across the drawbridge of Beaufort Castle and into the park beyond.

Her young heart was heavy, for though she had not met her lover for several weeks she knew a national tempest was gathering, and feared lest the clouds might at any moment break in all their fury.

At parting Richard of York had whispered: "Be brave and calm, and heroic, as befits the future wife of a White Rose Chief!"

But she had found it hard to obey him and now a thousand vague forebodings haunted her.

Suddenly a voice murmured: "Valentin, I am here!"

And she was locked in a convulsive embrace.

"Welcome, welcome, Lionel!" she replied; "my heart is full of fears, but mayhap your presence will drive them away."

"I would it might, dearest, but I have nothing pleasant to communicate."

"What mean you? Do not keep me in suspense."

"List, and I will tell you, but I must breathe it in a whisper, lest I should be overheard by some Lancastrian. My father's army lies not a league distant; the royal forces are on the march, and a pitched battle is inevitable."

"And where—where?"

"At St. Albans or thereabouts."

"Oh Lionel, Lionel, this may be our last meeting!"

The young man drew her close to him, and his face grew grave and solemn as he continued: "Ay, Valentin; it would be hard to die now, but I know not now how the battle will turn. If we are victorious the White Rose banner will float on yonder hill side in triumph; if we are defeated it will be trailed in the dust. Go up into your great Norman tower and watch the fight, and since your views have

been revolutionised I trust you will pray for our success!"

"Yes, Lionel, and let this thought cheer you in the hour of peril!"

The next moment he was gone, and the girl moved back into the castle with an unsteady step and during the whole night paced her room with feverish unrest.

The morning subsequent, Henry VI. and his army had almost reached St. Albans when they perceived the hills before them covered with men-at-arms marching rapidly towards the historic old town.

The Lancastrian leaders now halted and displayed the royal standard, while Lord Clifford was ordered to guard the barriers with his troops and the Duke of Buckingham sent to confer with the various of the White Rose who had encamped at Hatfield.

We are told that Richard Plantagenet, though a warrior of great courage, had no relish for bloodshed and did not forget that those to whom he now stood opposed were Englishmen like himself.

When therefore Buckingham went in Harry's name to ask him to lay down his arms he declared he would not do it unless Somerset was surrendered to justice.

The answer was reported to the king, and with more spirit than he had ever before been known to manifest he swore by St. Edward that he would as soon deliver up his crown as surrender Somerset or the meanest soldier in the camp.

The idea of reconciliation therefore became hopeless and the partisans of the House of York, who had been inactive several hours, prepared for an immediate battle.

The duke eloquently addressed his adherents, and with their pennons flaunting in the breeze and with clarions sounding the call to arms they commenced the contest.

CHAPTER IX.

To those of our readers who are familiar with the battle scenes of to-day—the terrific explosion of shells and the storm of shot poured in from adjacent gun-boats or ironclads—the conflict of St. Albans must have presented a quiet and singular appearance.

It is said some of the Yorkist troops could boast of muskets at that remote period, and these made great havoc in the ranks of the foe.

As the Lancastrians occupied the town of St. Albans, they had the advantage of position and were so confident of victory that the men-at-arms were commanded to put to death all the White Rose prisoners that should be taken.

For a time they succeeded in holding the barriers, which Lord Clifford had been sent to guard, but Warwick was not to be daunted by the steady resistance of the foe.

Guiding his soldiers stealthily around the hill, on which St. Albans stood, the brave warrior demolished a lofty wall, swept across the garden like an avalanche of fire, and, while the claron sounded loud and shrill, exclaimed:

"A Warwick! a Warwick!" and ordered his men to charge upon the enemy.

His presence, while it cheered and encouraged the Yorkists, sent a thrill of alarm through the Lancastrian ranks, and the White Rose Chieftain, led on by the earl's war-cry, rushed into the town.

The conflict now became terrific; face to face, hand to hand, they fought among the dwellings, in the lanes, the streets and even the market-place. In the thickest of the fight rode Lionel Richmond, mounted on a powerful white war-horse, arrayed in a coat of mail, and armed with the various weapons in use at that day.

Two or three times he had met Lord Percy and Jasper de Vere and though they wore their visors down he recognized their figure, their voices and the baleful light of those eyes which had often watched him with jealous rage.

He understood why they followed him thus, and his heart beat quick as he sprang aside to avoid their battle-axes, parried their swords, thrusts, and flung their javalins to the ground.

At length, a mailed form, a fearless rider and most expert marksman in their ranks, succeeded in unhorsing Richmond for the first time, and shouting:

"Ah, Lady Valentin shall wait in vain for her lover to-night," disappeared.

The two cavaliers broke into a triumphant laugh, and plunged into the conflict with fresh courage; but Warwick cheered on archers and spearmen to the assault, and the Duke of York reinforced every party that needed help and pressed forward fresh warriors to relieve the weary and wounded.

Somerset fought at the onset with a bravery worthy of his Continental reputation, but he finally lost his presence of mind, and fell to rise no more.

"Victory! victory!" shouted the Yorkists: "victory has turned on the side of the White Rose Chief!"

The panic-stricken Lancastrians now fled from the field, leaving the dead and wounded to the mercy of Richard Plantagenet and his followers.

History tells us that ere this hour the king had been wounded by an arrow, and left in a shattered cottage hard by.

When the battle was ended, the Duke of York found him, and treated his vanquished kinsman with all due respect.

At his request York ordered a cessation of hostilities, led the king to the abbey, and they prayed together before the shrine of England's first martyr.

While they knelt they heard a light footfall in the aisle, and, glancing back, the wounded king said:

"Look you, good cousin, that is Lady Valentia Lyndhurst."

The duke started as he beheld a female figure standing at a short distance like a statue of despair.

"Lady Valentia," he murmured and at the sound of his voice a long shudder crept over her frame and the mute white lips were unsealed.

"Have you brought him here? she gasped, gazing dreamily around her."

"Who, child?"

"Lionel Richmond; they told me he fell to-day on the ill-fated field of St. Alban's, but I cannot find him, and I have searched street after street, the market place and the hills beyond. Have you brought him to the abbey to have mass said for his soul?"

"Nay, poor lady, Lionel has been removed and is under the care of a skillful leech; he is not mortally wounded."

"Thank Heaven!" she uttered, and her eyes, and the girl sank down, and raising her eyes, remained for a time in silent prayer, then she turned towards the duke and continued:

"All day I have been watching from the great tower of Beaufort Castle, and finally I saw a mail-clad figure flying up the broad avenue, across the draw-bridge—it was Lord Percy. And pausing for an instant before the open door he shrieked:

"Tell the Lady Valentia that her discarded lovers are avenged; Lionel Richmond has fallen."

"Villain!" exclaimed the duke and she went on:

"When the tidings were brought me I did not sink down, and act as you might expect, but tried to follow your parting advice and be brave and heroic as befits the betrothed wife of a White Rose Chief. I flew to the scene of battle, and sought for him till my heart grew faint with dread, and seeing a dim light in the abbey I stole in like one moving in a painful dream. And now, where is Lionel?"

The duke turned to the king, requested him to wait till he should come back, and led Valentia to the dwelling which served as a hospital.

Her eager eyes soon singled out the cot on which Richmond was lying, and while Richard Plantagenet retraced his steps to the abbey she moved toward her lover.

There lay the gallant cavalier who had fought so bravely, with a torchlight shining full upon him—a solemn picture to be transferred to memory's keeping!

His helmet had been unbound, revealing his noble brow, the thick damp hair, the closed eyes, the silent lips; his steel corset had been unlaced, his wounds banded and two or three nuns stood near ministering to his wants.

"Let me take your place," murmured Valentia, "for assuredly I have a right to watch over him."

The sisters of charity withdrew to others who were suffering, and the girl stationed herself at her lover's side.

A half-hour had not passed when a slight, girlish form crossed the threshold and gazed eagerly around the room as if in search of some friend.

Suddenly she stopped, as if rivetted to the spot, for her glance had fallen upon Richmond and the lady watching over him with so much solicitude.

She had hastily flung on a scarlet cloak embroidered with gold and tied with heavy gold cord and tassels, and this rich drapery had fallen back in her hurried walk, disclosing a black velvet bodice and a skirt of wine-coloured silk.

Her head was uncovered and her unbraided hair fell about her dark, wistful eyes.

It was Bonibell Seymour, and she was afterwards heard to declare that she seemed to live years while she stood thus gazing at the scene I have attempted to describe.

She had never before met Valentia Lyndhurst, for during the duke's protectorate she had unvoluntarily shrunk from Lionel, but she felt certain she was in the presence of her rival.

Finally she summoned strength to move forward and carry out the plans she had formed.

"Who are you lady?" she asked. "Believe me, no idle curiosity prompts my question."

"Valentia Lyndhurst" was the gentle answer. "So I thought. And I am Bonibell Seymour. Something in your face tells me I can trust you and therefore I speak frankly."

"Whatever confidence you repose in me shall be sacred."

"This wounded warrior is dear to me as well as to you; but while he had only a friend's regard for Bonibell, he has loved you almost to idolatry. It cost me a keen pang to hear what he had risked and sacrificed for your sake; and when you were in London and they wrote me messages requesting my presence at the protector's Court I purposely kept aloof; but as soon as I learned through my brothers that war had again begun in good earnest I left home, on pretext of visiting the convent where I had been educated."

"When I saw the Lancastrians flying past in wild dismay and Harold, Lionel Richmond's page, brought me the news that he had fallen, I hastened to St. Alban's. Some of his own men informed me he was in the hospital and hither I came but you had forestalled me and were already at you post."

"The sight of you was a great shock, but, thanks to the good angels who are ever watching to guide us, I have resolved I would not hate you because you stood between me and Lionel Richmond. You have suffered much for him and I can but reverence your character—here at his side let us clasp hands."

The tears gushed into Valentia's eyes, and, clasping the girl's fingers with friendly warmth, she murmured:

"Lady Bonibell, how nobly you have acted—how beautiful you are! the only wonder is that Lionel could have fallen in love with me when he had known you!"

"Nay, nay," cried the girl, "you overrate me; but how fares it with this wounded warrior? Has he recognized you?"

"Not yet, but the leech informs me his injuries are not fatal, and with such a hope I can patiently wait for a recognition."

"I will pass on now," observed Bonibell. "Mayhap I may find some sufferer who may be grateful for my care, and," she added in a whisper, "do not grieve for me. I am young and buoyant, and I do not mean to grow bitter and cynical."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Valentia, and the girl continued:

"Ere I reach my life's summer time may heal whatever wound there may be to-night in Bonibell Seymour's heart."

"For that I hope and pray, dear lady."

And Bonibell glided away, moving from cot to cot, with a world of compassionate interest in her dark, tearful eyes.

Bonibell, at length espied a young White Rose chief who had fought gallantly during the battle of St. Alban's, and been left for dead in the marketplace.

"Who—who calls me?" asked the girl.

"Have you entirely forgotten Ralph Montague?" was the faint response.

The girl clasped her hands, in surprise and terror as a weary head was lifted from the cot in remote corner, and a pair of yearning eyes were fixed upon her.

The leech and nuns had not yet reached him, and nothing had been done for his comfort, and, springing to his side, she abandoned herself to a perfect passion of tears.

Then she tremblingly removed the helmet and exerted every effort for his relief.

The leech was summoned to dress his severe wounds, and Bonibell bathed his brow and stirred the languid air with a green bough till he fell asleep.

Gazing at him as he lay there, a throng of bitter memories came rushing back upon the girl.

"Ralph Montague loved me once," she soliloquized. "Though he was the hero of more than one battle-field, he laid his brave, true, faithful heart at my feet. How much better it would have been if I had never, never dreamed of Lionel, and accepted him, but it is too late! The leech shook his head and looked grave when I asked if he thought Ralph Montague would recover, and his wounds are so serious and he has been neglected so long that I fear his good mother will soon be childless!"

Thus she mused as the night hours wore on, and when his eyes unclosed and he murmured "Bonibell," in a tone which would have thrilled any woman's heart, she felt as if she would fain expiate her girlish errors by her future course.

(To be continued.)

A VALUABLE marble fragment of an ancient Roman calendar has been found near Cervi, Rome. The calendar contains the latter half of the first five months of the year, and is supposed to date from the beginning of the Empire, as the writing is exactly similar

to that of other calendars which have been discovered. The usual days, feasts, and games are marked on the calendar, as well as a list of the principal solemnities, several of the last being previously unknown, while the latest date-note is the dedication by Augustus of the Altar of Peace, in the 745th year of Rome.

EXILED FROM HOME.

CHAPTER XIV.

GWEN was standing at the drawing-room window screened by the soft falling lace curtains, when Ronald Chilton rode up and dismounted at the side porch. She watched him idly, a flush kindling and deepening on her cheeks. She saw Mr. Quillet meet him respectfully and conduct him into the house, while a stable-lad led away the horse. Still Mr. Chilton did not enter the drawing-room as she expected, and the sound of the library door closing informed her that he had been shown into that apartment.

What could it mean? Had the butler sought private speech with Mr. Chilton?

Gwen asked herself these questions in an odd tremor and suspense.

She had waited a month for an answer from Squire Markham to the letter of the Quilletts, but no letter had come. During these weeks she had changed greatly. The communication which the housekeeper had made to her concerning her origin had not crushed her, as the Quilletts had expected, had not broken her high spirit. She seemed to have gained a new hauteur. Her pure, proud, high-bred face had gained in all these characteristics. But she was thinner than of old—far thinner. The gold ring that a month ago had fitted her slim finger was now too large and had been transferred to her portmanteau. The blue veil showed more plainly upon her temples. Her pensive-dark eyes were larger and more lustrous. The mouth had gained a wistfulness in repose that was touching. She was graver than of old. She seemed to have forgotten her pretty, willful ways, and she never sang now.

The Quilletts said to themselves how well she bore the revelation of her true history. They never dreamed of the sleepless, sorrowful nights, of the hidden anguish, of the bright young life poisoned at its spring; they never suspected how heavy was the burden they had laid upon her, nor how she sickened of her existence, and wished that she had died in her mother's arms in that wild storm of nearly seventeen years before.

With all her added pride, despite her increased hauteur, Gwen exhibited a strange humility in the presence of the Quilletts. She felt grateful to them for all they had done for her, and begged Mrs. Quillet to give her work to do, and to allow her to give up her rooms; but the housekeeper, colder and more severe than ever, bade her continue to occupy the house, and wait patiently for a letter from the squire. The Quilletts, connecting her with all the trouble their lives had known, felt harshly towards her. And they made her life doubly bitter to her, when a little sympathy might have lessened her loneliness.

Driven back upon herself, suffering as only a great and sensitive nature can suffer, Gwen bore all her horrible torture with an outward calmness and coldness. But under that ice a great fire was burning. The Quilletts, seeming more like enemies than friends, and avoiding her, Gwen's only gleam of comfort during these weeks had been the visits of Mr. Chilton.

She had never thought of him as a lover. He had come to Lonsmoor almost daily; had talked to her about art and literature; had brought much sweetness into the bitterness of her life; and she had grown to look for his coming as one in darkness looks for the sunshine.

"What can Mr. Quillet be saying to him?" she asked herself, uneasily, withdrawing from the window to a sofa. "Can he be telling him not to come here again?"

She took up some embroidery, making an effort to work upon it, while her thoughts flew to the library and speculated as to what was passing therein.

But even her wildest speculations never came near the truth.

For Mr. Quillet, in his grim, hard way, was telling her story, with but one reserve, to her admirer.

"Mr. Chilton," he said, when they had entered the library, "you will wonder that I should ask a private interview with you—I, who am only a butler—a servant in this house. But in Squire Markham's ab-

sence I and my wife are in charge here. And we are Miss Winter's actual and only guardians. I want to speak to you of her."

Ronald Chilton bowed gravely. He was too true a gentleman to show surprise at this address, even from a butler.

"You visit Lonemoor very often, Mr. Chilton," pursued Mr. Quillet, in some embarrassment. "You are in truth Miss Winter's only visitor. But that she has no friends or acquaintances here, and that she is newly come from school, I think I should not have allowed your visits. But in view of her loneliness and your credentials, I have been glad to have you come."

Mr. Chilton again bowed.

"I am not a gentleman," continued the butler, still greatly embarrassed, "but I have my own ideas of honour. And it has seemed to me that you ought not to see Miss Winter again until I have spoken to you about her. The people hereabouts speak still things of her. Have you heard them?"

Ronald Chilton's blue eyes flashed.

"No one has dared to speak to me disrespectfully of Miss Winter!" he exclaimed. "No one has ever spoken her name to me!"

The butler drew a sigh of relief.

"Let me tell you what is said," he remarked.

"The bailiff's son—young Mr. Orkney—wants to marry Miss Winter. She has refused him. He persecutes her with his attentions. His family are greatly opposed to the match, and have set about vile stories to the effect that she is a foundling, a beggar, and all that sort of thing."

Mr. Chilton's face flushed, but he did not speak.

"There is some foundation for these stories, sir," said Mr. Quillet, reluctantly. "Miss Winter is a lady. You hardly need that I should tell you that. Her mother was a lady before her—a lady born and bred. Her life had a sorrowful—an awful—ending. Let me tell you how she died."

Simply and briefly, the butler told of the terrible storm in which the mother of Gwen had come to Lonemoor. He spoke of her youth and beauty. He told that she was insane. Then he told how a month later, leaving behind her the infant to which she had given birth at Lonemoor, she had gone forth in storm and terror to her death.

Mr. Quillet made no attempt to gloss over his opinion of the dead girl. He told of the headstone at her grave in Penistone, and of the name he had caused to be cut upon it. He mentioned without boasting what he had done for Gwen, how she had been educated and cared for, and concluded:

"Now you know all, sir. Miss Winter is refined and accomplished—a lady, whatever her parentage. It was my duty to tell you the truth. She is likely to be sent away from here any day. I have nothing more to say. Shall I order your horse, sir?"

He moved towards the bell-pull, secretly anxious and trembling.

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Chilton, quietly. "I came to call upon Miss Winter. I will join her now."

And he walked towards the drawing-room.

Gwen was busy with her embroidery when he entered. She arose, and he noticed how she had changed since that day of their first meeting upon the moor. The change had come so gradually that he had not observed it till now.

He went up to her, exchanged greetings, and sat down beside her. Life seemed in an unusually merry mood this morning, and Gwen's smiles returned to the lips they seemed to have deserted.

It must not be supposed that Ronald Chilton was insensible to the advantages of birth and connection. The story told him by the butler had wounded him to the quick, for he had grown to love Gwen with all the ardour of a fervent and impetuous nature.

But he was noble and chivalrous in the highest degree. Gwen would only be Gwen if she were a duke's daughter. And with her burden of sorrow and possible disgrace, lonely, poor and friendless, Gwen was Gwen still, peerless among women, the only woman he had ever loved!

His heart yearned over her now in her desolation. He knew what she must suffer. He longed to gather her into his arms and shield her from the whole cruel world. His tongue ceased its pleasant jests and a silence fell between them.

Gwen looked up in surprise and met his gaze, full, tender and worshipping, fixed upon her. She blushed and trembled.

"Gwen," said Mr. Chilton, softly, "I love you. We have not known each other a long time, if we count by days and weeks, but we have learned to

know each other well, have we not? Will you be my wife?"

The passionate tenderness with which this statement was uttered went to Gwen's heart. A great answering tenderness awoke in her soul. She could not answer.

He seized her hand and in quick, impetuous words he urged his suit. Her silence, her blushes, her downcast eyes, her very trembling, all betrayed to him that she returned his love. The truth, too, rushed upon Gwen's heart in a flood.

"Tell me that you love me!" he whispered. And Gwen told him, not in words, but in blushes. He caught her in his arms and bestowed upon her a lover's embrace. And then Gwen remembered. She disengaged herself, and said, desperately:

"Ronald, Mr. Chilton, I forgot—I cannot be your wife!"

"And why not, Gwen?" he asked.

"I cannot tell you, except that I am not what you think me. I am not a relative of Squire Markham. I have no right here. I have no name even," said poor Gwen, hanging her head.

"Mr. Quillet has told me all that you know yourself of your own history, Gwen," said her lover. "And there is no reason why you should not become my wife. No false notions shall stand between you and me, Gwen. I shall not give you up. I shall not heed your scruples."

"But your friends?"

"I have no mother," said Mr. Chilton. "The only friend I have to consult is my father, Viscount Chilton, who is now at our country home in Berke. I shall write to him this evening."

The title "Viscount" Chilton struck upon Gwen's heart like a blow. If Ronald's father were noble, he would never accept her as a daughter-in-law. Ronald read her thoughts.

"My father has no other child," he said, "and regards my happiness above all other considerations. He will love you, Gwen. I shall insist upon a speedy marriage and take you home to Chilton Park. This is no place for you."

"Lord Chilton will never consent to our marriage, Ronald. It will be better so. You ought to marry a lady of family."

"Whether I will or no?" interrupted Ronald, smiling. "No, Gwen I shall marry for love and love only."

He emphasized the declaration, after an audacious fashion, with a kiss.

The girl knew little of the world. She but vaguely comprehended how, by reason of her birth, she was set apart from other people. She knew herself worthy of even the Hon. Mr. Chilton, and she could see no reason why, if he also deemed her worthy and loved her, she should not marry him. Yet a foreboding of trouble came upon her even in her joy.

"I think Lord Chilton will refuse his consent," she said. "And until you gain his consent I will not allow you to bind yourself to me by an engagement. No, Ronald, you shall be free and unfettered until you have his answer. Don't urge me I know I am right."

She would not be swayed from this resolve.

"I shall claim the rights of an engaged lover," said Ronald. "I will come over to see you again in the morning. May I not?"

"You will be always welcome. But I shall not expect you. Mr. Quillet has told you my history. It is all fresh in your mind. You are sorry for me, and have spoken on impulse. Think over the matter to-night, Ronald and if reflection brings change of purpose I shall not blame you. I shall not expect you."

When he went away, an hour later, she repeated these words to him.

And yet when morning came she did expect him. She dressed herself prettily for his eyes, and took her place in the drawing-room, watching the moor eagerly and restlessly.

Ten o'clock struck, and he did not come. Eleven chimed, and still he did not appear. Had reflection brought a change of purpose? Had he been carried away by impulse on the previous day, and since regretted his profligacy?

"If he isn't here by noon I shall give him up," thought Gwen.

But noon passed, and still he was missing. The whole weary day wore away, and no message came from him.

"He has taken me at my word," the girl said to herself, "I shall never see him again. I have lost my love!"

CHAPTER XXV.

It seemed indeed as if Ronald Chilton were a false lover, and that he had wooed and "rode away," like him of the ballad.

Gwen waited for him that evening, watched for him next day, and the day thereafter, but he did not come.

No message came from him. He seemed to have dropped completely out of her life, leaving an awful, yawning void.

She had told him to give due reflection to his proposal, fearing that he was acting upon impulse and out of a chivalric pity for her. He seemed to have taken her at her word, to have reconsidered the matter calmly, and to have repented his haste.

When a week had passed and no tidings had come from Ronald Chilton, Gwen gave him up in her own heart, but she did not blame him. Nor did she deem him false or inconsistent. With her history, she knew herself no fitting match for him, and submitted with a proud humility to be thrown aside as valueless.

The butler secretly believed that the story he had told Mr. Chilton had put an end to the young gentleman's visits.

"It's just as well, Maria," he said, when alone with his wife. "He is of a great family in Berkshire, the Chiltons of Chilton. His father is a viscount. His mother was a duke's daughter. If Miss Gwen were the lawful and acknowledged granddaughter of Squire Markham she would still be no match for him. Being what she is, of course he would not marry her on any terms. I blame myself that I did not tell him all at the outset; but I supposed that he would hear something of all this gossip about Miss Gwen. It is fortunate that she was not interested in him!"

"How do you know that she was not?" inquired the housekeeper. "Miss Gwen doesn't wear her heart upon her sleeve. Her hurt may be deeper than we can guess. We have been to blame in allowing her visits, John. It means as if everything we do is a mistake."

"Why don't we hear from the squire?" muttered Mr. Quillet. "Can he be angry with us, and refuse even to answer our letter? Is he coming home? Has he written to his solicitor to turn us out? His silence must mean harm to us."

The old house at Lonemoor seemed full of troubles in these days. Even the servants shared the general gloom. The Quillets were wratched with apprehensions, but Gwen's burdens were hardest of all to bear, and still she bore them in a proud silence. The housekeeper resentfully called her insensible. She little dreamed of the sleepless, sorrowful nights, the agonised thoughts, the horrible torture that young soul endured in a pitiful patience.

A few days after the disappearance of Ronald Chilton Gwen sat one morning busy at her embroidery in the sitting-room in which the Squire Markham was first introduced to the reader. She had abandoned the drawing-room of late. This gloomy apartment, with its dusky oak wainscoting, its sombre furniture, its dreary, dingy family pictures, suited her present mood better.

The door opened abruptly and Clayton Orkney appeared on the threshold.

Gwen started up with an impulse to retreat. There was no other door than that in which he stood, and she moved towards the bell-pull.

"Don't ring," said young Orkney, advancing into the room. "I must apologize for entering unannounced, but the maids are not visible, and Mr. and Mrs. Quillet are in the garden. I beg you to grant me a brief interview, Miss Winter. I have something of importance to say to you."

His manner was respectful. Gwen halted, regarding him quietly and expectantly.

"I behaved badly to you, Miss Gwen, that day upon the moor," observed young Orkney, fluently, as if repeating a lesson he had well learned beforehand. "I desire to apologize to you for my conduct."

The girl bowed.

"You look pale and thin," continued young Orkney, advancing a little nearer. "All this trouble is telling heavily upon you. Let me take you away from this house and this neighbourhood. I love you, Miss Gwen, and I offer you honourable marriage. Will you be my wife?"

"It is impossible," she said.

"Why impossible?" and her suitor's face red dened. "You will not be obliged to meet my family. I will take you directly to London. I am respectable and can earn a good support for you."

"It is impossible," repeated Gwen. "I do not like you, Mr. Orkney, and I could never marry you."

"But you do like your recent visitor, Mr. Chilton," cried Orkney, eagerly. "I suppose you'd marry him if you had a chance? But after visiting you every day for a month, and giving rise to no end of gossip, he has abandoned the field to me. He was only amusing himself in this quarter. And, having amused himself sufficiently, he left Yorkshire last Tuesday night—a week ago."

Gwen's hand dropped to her side. Her face grew white; her heart seemed for an instant to stand still.

Ronald had left Yorkshire? She had not thought that he had gone.

"Why, you didn't really expect to win him?" exclaimed Orkney, in amazement. "Do you know who he is? He is the Honourable Ronald Chilton, son of Viscount Chilton—a regular nob—heir to one of the richest properties in England. It can't be possible that you have ever for a moment dreamed that he would marry you!"

Gwen did not even resent this insult. She was stunned by the announcement of Mr. Chilton's departure. Yet what had she expected after his long and significant silence of the past week?

And Ronald had gone away on Tuesday night—and it was on that very Tuesday that he had told her that he loved her, and asked her to become his wife! He had been afraid to see her again. He had departed in haste, without a word to her of his intention! It was only too clear that he had reported his folly and given her up.

"You have made a great mistake, Miss Gwen," said Orkney. "Mr. Chilton was a sportsman, and you were fair game, that's all. He will forget you in a week, and next year he'll marry a highborn lady, and laugh at all his boyish follies. But you need not wear the willow for him."

Gwen had sunk into a chair, a great blackness obscuring her vision. She did not faint, but her pallor was like that of one long dead. Orkney's latest words were to her but an unintelligible murmur, and much that followed she did not hear, but finally his speech again became intelligible, and she listened with nerves that quivered as under a surgeon's knife.

"I was returning from Penistone on horseback," Orkney was saying, "when I met Mr. Chilton on his way there. He was mounted also, and seemed in haste. I had heard his name and rank, and concluded to apologize to him for that some on the moor the day he knocked me down. He is the son of a viscount, and will be a lord himself some day, and I've respect for titles," acknowledged Orkney, frankly. "I stopped him and apologized. I noticed that he seemed agitated. He accepted the apology, I suppose, for he bowed coldly, and was about to pass on when I said that I must speak a few words in justification of myself. And then I told him, you know—just here the young man became embarrassed—"all about your history, and what people said, and so forth, and that you were not looked upon exactly as other young women were, and that sort of thing, and that I considered myself justified."

"What did he say?" asked the girl in a strained voice, scarcely above a whisper.

Orkney rubbed his cheek instinctively and unconsciously, as if to relieve the blow of a riding-whip which Mr. Chilton had planted there. But Gwen did not observe the movement.

"What could he say?" demanded Orkney, with a forced laugh. "It was true, and he knew it. He answered me that 'Miss Winter was nothing to him, and that if I chose to make amends to her for my insult the field was open to me.' That is why I am here this moment. Mr. Chilton has withdrawn from the field. Is there not then a chance for me?"

The speech attributed to our hero by the bailiffs was false in every word and had been invented by young Orkney, but Gwen was in no condition of mind to analyze it and discover its falsity. Besides, the fact that Chilton had gone, and without a word to her, seemed to guarantee its truth.

"Will you not let me offer you a home?" continued Orkney, as she remained silent. "Will you not become my wife?"

"No—no!" cried the girl, with a shudder. "Leave me. I never want to look upon your face again!"

Orkney bit his lips in a sudden anger.

"Do you know that no answer has been received from Squire Markham to the letters my father and the Quillets sent him?" he demanded. "My father thinks the packet has miscarried, and he has resolved to have you expelled from this house. The solicitor will probably co-operate with him. They intend to

visit you this very day. You will be turned out of Lonemoor. And, by Jove! my father and the lawyer are coming now! I see our waggonette approaching. Miss Gwen, I offer you a last chance. Take it, and I'll defend you from these enemies of yours!"

The girl commanded herself by a strong effort. In the approach of this new danger she regained her coolness and courage. She seemed brought to bay. All the world appeared arrayed against her, but she would defend herself to the last.

"Cease to persecute me with your offers of marriage!" she exclaimed. "I have said that I do not like you. Shall I speak yet plainer? I fairly loathe the sight of you. I would die sooner than become your wife. Now you have my answer!"

This passionate outburst served to inflame Orkney's rage, but before he had time to repeat, the waggonette rolled into the yard.

He was in the midst of an appeal to her to reconsider her answer, and to allow him to defend her from the attack about to be made upon her, when the bailiff, the lawyer and the Quillets burst into the room.

The girl was standing like a statue, white and immovable. Young Orkney was flushed and eager. His father's glasses fell upon him.

"You here?" the bailiff exclaimed.

"As you see," replied the son. "I have just made Miss Winter an offer of marriage, and I am waiting in the hope of a favourable answer."

This cool statement inflamed the anger of the bailiff to an unreasoning rage. He had come to Lonemoor with the lawyer, bent upon the expulsion of Gwen without any further delay, being incited thereto by the female members of his family, and his purpose knew no faltering from this moment of his son's defiance.

"You hear!" he exclaimed, turning to the lawyer and to Mr. and Mrs. Quillet. "You can all see now that I am right in my demand. This girl should not remain here another day. What right has she here? A pauper—the daughter of a wandering outcast—what place has she in a respectable country-house like Lonemoor?"

The lawyer, a grave, elderly gentleman, with a kindly face, interposed to stem this torrent of words. But the bailiff, usually cold and cautious, believing his family honour at stake, was firm in the maintenance of his case.

"We have come here, have we not, to settle this matter?" inquired Mr. Orkney. "If we have, we must not let any foolish scruples stand in our way. We have failed to receive any answer to our letters to Squire Markham, despatched nearly six weeks ago. My opinion is that the packet went astray. Shall we wait another month, until we can write again and receive answers?"

"I think it would be best," said the lawyer. "Another month of waiting cannot do any harm."

"But I think it can," exclaimed the bailiff, quickly. "This girl has no right here, but she is rinting on the squire's property, and making Lunemoor a scandal to the whole country-side. She has had a young gentleman to visit her every day for a month. She receives my son. She dresses and conducts herself as a young lady—as mistress of this house. I refuse to be a party to this waste of our employer's property. I demand that the girl be sent away this very day."

The bailiff and the housekeeper made protest, but they were growing weary of the contest, were filled with doubts as to the wisdom of their course, and wished vainly that they had never encountered themselves with the girl. If they had followed the example of the squire, and abandoned her at the outset, sent her to an asylum, or something of that sort, it might have been better for themselves and for her—so they thought now in their perturbation.

And Gwen, preternaturally sharp-sighted, read their thoughts.

"I am more to blame than anyone else in allowing the visits of Mr. Chilton," said the housekeeper.

"Miss Gwen has always been gentle and tractable."

The bailiff sneered.

"If you choose to set up a pauper as your idol, and worship and serve her, you can do so," he said; "but you mustn't expect the rest of the world to worship her also. I repeat her presence here is a scandal, Lonemoor is become a byword. The very Hodges sneer as they pass it. Let her go away, if she has a common sense of decency. I wonder that she can stay here a day or an hour under the circumstances, knowing who and what she is!"

Gwen had heard all unmoved. Now she broke her silence, speaking haughtily, with head uplifted, and dark eyes glowing with scorn at her enemies:

"I have remained at Lonemoor until now because Mr. and Mrs. Quillet desired it," she said, in a clear, cold voice. "They brought me up: I owed them a certain amount of obedience. I have been obedient, I have remained with them when a stay here has been worse than torture. But now I must think and act for myself. I refuse to allow Mr. and Mrs. Quillet to be persecuted any longer on my account. They will be glad to be rid of me. Mr. Orkney, you need have no further fears upon my account. I shall leave Lonemoor immediately!"

Young Orkney protested. His father expressed his satisfaction. The lawyer's face showed his approval. Even the Quillets, while dismayed, exhibited a certain relief at the announcement of Gwen's resolve.

"But where will you go?" cried the housekeeper. "Stay Miss Gwen, until we can hear from the squire. Or if you must go, we will go with you. We cannot let you go alone."

"I will go as my mother did," said Gwen, with unavoidable bitterness. "And I would I might go to my death—as she did to harm! Mr. Quillet, will you order the chaise for me? I must go at once—within the hour!"

This was her decision, and nothing could change it. The lawyer approved it. He could not see that her further stay at Lonemoor would do any good. Gwen went up to her room to prepare for her departure, and Mrs. Quillet attended her.

An hour later, the chaise drew up at the door, Gwen's small trunk was put in, Gwen, herself, in travelling costume, took her seat, and placed himself beside her and drove away in the direction of Penistone.

And so the girl, in shame and bitterness, with the burden of her mother's disgrace upon her, passed out of Squire's Markham's house, like her mother before her, to begin her battle with the world. Would her battle end as her mother's had ended?

(To be continued.)

"EVERYBODY."

We do so much, just because some one else does it, that life becomes wearisome at times, and the longing to fly away to some desert island, where there are no "folks" to see fashioning, becomes acute.

Why should I, for instance, wear kid gloves? They are always breaking; they are costly; they are—if one were not used to them—hideous. Why can I not find, or discover, some comfortable hand-covering? something handsome and durable? I think I could. Well, think we could; but everybody wears kid gloves so we buy the absurd things, spend much time in squeezing them on, and would feel disgraced without them, because other people do. So with your segment of stove-pipe or something, covered with, I believe, silk plush, the thing you call a dress hat; and that other thing, that has not the wings of a swallow but its tails, your dress coat. Other people put them on, so you must make a guy of yourself of course.

Perhaps you admire a cloak and a sombrero. So do I; but I know a gentleman who, being eccentric, wears something of the sort, and when he one day requested me to take a walk with him, I nearly told a white lie to escape from being seen in public with one who did something quite honest and really picturesque that no one else did. Ladies smile and gentlemen grin and little boys throw stones when something like Don Sebastian Somebody in a melodrama stalks down the street, but the absurd fashion of the period receives no offensive notice. Everybody dresses so.

Everybody! What an odd thing it is to think that everybody does so and so because everybody does it, and that if everybody did not do it everybody wouldn't have to do it.

Who is the first everybody? Where does it start?—not the dress alone, but all the things we say and do and even think, for the same absurd reason? We live, we eat, we arrange our affairs all after everybody's plan. Our home is like that of everybody else. Our children are educated like everybody's. We cannot marry or die without thinking, or having some one think for us of everybody. The lace veil and wedding-cake, the little tour that married lovers take, when they had often rather stay at home, the baby's christening robe, the widow's black veil—yes, the shroud, and the coffin, and the death-blighted flowers that lie over pulseless breasts, and are horrible to look upon—I think everybody writes rules for them. Overbearing, insolent everybody.

Everybody! Where is he? Who is she? What are they? I am as good an everybody as any one else; so are you. M. K. D.

"Ah, yes, indeed. And there is more than one whose eyes would brighten at his coming. But he only cares for his books, my lady. Every spare hour he is in the library."

The anxious look gave way, and Margaret's beautiful eyes were full of peace as she turned to meet Joseph.

"The first flowers and fruit of the season, Miss Vernon," he said, holding towards her a bouquet of roses and violets and placing on the table a basket of strawberries.

How smiling and happy he looked!

She knew he must have heard her last words to his mother. Her face was hid amongst the flowers to hide the crimson tide.

"How beautiful! Thank you," she said.

Placing the flowers in a vase, she turned away. "She might have put them in her own room," sighed Joseph. "But I will not grieve for this. She is not altogether indifferent to me. She called me Josie. She cannot have forgotten—no, she remembers—that she is Miss Vernon, and the difference, nay, the distance, between us."

Indeed, after that day the distance seemed to widen.

Mrs. Grey, who during the absence of the family had occupied apartments in Vernon Mansion, a few days after the return went back to the gardener's cottage.

A few weeks after this Joseph Grey was in the library at Mr. Vernon's request, copying a legal document, when the door opened and Margaret and her father entered.

"Can you give your father a few moments, my daughter? Since your young friends have been here I hardly get a look at you or have you a moment all to myself."

"No, you dearest of fathers, do not be jealous! Do you not know that you will have me all alone to yourself as long as you live?" Margaret said, clasping her arms about his neck.

"No, no, love! No, little lady. I want to talk to you about just this very thing. I have a letter from George Mason. You must read it and give me his answer."

More rapidly went Joseph's pen. Louder the scratching on the paper.

He could not get out without passing them. He hoped they would hear him.

He was revolving in his mind what to do, when Margaret said:

"I shall never marry, father."

"Nay, nay, love. You distress me. I should not be content to seek your mother leaving you alone here. You do not dislike Mason, my dear?"

"Oh, no. But I do not like him well enough to marry him, papa."

"Let me give him hope, for my sake, dear. There is no one that I could give you to that I like so well. Ah, if it were not—"

An exclamation of pain escaped Joseph, almost simultaneously with which Margaret, in a low, warning voice, said "Father!" and Joseph Grey came forward.

"What is it, Joseph?" asked Mr. Vernon. "You are ill surely!"

"No, dear sir. A sudden and sharp pain, which I hope will not be continued," Joseph answered.

"Ah, I know you have been working too hard. There, go home and rest my boy."

As Joseph passed Lady Margaret he raised his eyes to hers.

She could not have mistaken the wild, appealing look; yet, turning away, she said:

"I will try to make you happy, father."

That evening Joseph Grey announced to Mr. Vernon his intention of leaving home the next day.

"So sudden this is, my boy!" Mr. Vernon said, surprised and pained.

"No, sir. I've been intending for several weeks to tell you; but I dreaded so much this separation that I have delayed speaking of it until the latest moment," Joseph answered, with much feeling.

There was a long conversation, and Mr. Vernon concluded by saying:

"I will say good-bye to-night. I may not be up in the morning. Write to me, dear boy. And call on me if I can help you. Feel as if you were applying to your father, Joseph; and now Heaven bless you!"

Early the next morning a wild cry arose in the Vernon mansion.

Mr. Vernon's spirit had fled!

The hour for Joseph's departure came.

He had watched an opportunity when finding Margaret alone to say good-bye.

Paler than the pale girl before him he approached her.

"Miss Vernon, I am going. I have come to say good-bye."

She did not speak. She had been prepared for it. She arose and held out her hand.

"Good-bye, Miss Vernon."

He stood before her holding her hand tightly between his own.

She raised her eyes to meet a world of love in his.

Quickly her own drooped, and, seeking to release her hand, she said:

"Good-bye."

"And that is all. You will send me forth without a word, a kind wish! Oh, my little lady, say 'I'll not forget you, Josie!' Oh, turn not away, Lady Margaret! Speak to me! For never loved man as I love you! my lady! my queen!" Joseph cried, still tightly holding her hand.

Ah, she raised not her eyes as she spoke the cruel words:

"You forget! The women of our race have never blushed for the object of their love. They never unite their fate except with those of whom not only they but their country were proud. Go! May you be prosperous and happy. Farewell!"

She disengaged her hand and turned away.

The door closed after him.

A moment more and she hid her face amid the cushions of the sofa and, with a moan of agony,

"Alone! Alone! All gone now!"

"My little lady!"

She sprang up to see Joseph bending over her.

"Why are you here?" she asked, reproachfully.

"Why? To pledge my heart, my life to you! To tell you my proud lady, that I will win you! Heaven will reward such love as mine. I ask no word of hope now. But I shall work and pray, and you may know that I am waiting for you to bid me come."

"Go! oh, go!" she cried, beseechingly.

He turned, hesitated, and sprang forward to catch her to his heart—to hold her there an instant only, press his lips to her brow, and cry "Heaven bless and keep you, my love, my life!" and passed from her sight.

If Joseph confided his love to his mother she gave no intimation whatever of it to Margaret.

Immediately after her son's departure Mrs. Grey became again an inmate of Margaret's home.

Then, as a guest and esteemed friend, Margaret never again addressed her by the old title of "nurse."

Very soon the servants caught their mistress's mood, and ere long it seemed that the household, even Mrs. Grey herself, forgot that she had ever been other than the dear friend and guest of the Vernon family.

Margaret seldom went into society. Still her beauty attracted many admirers. Suitors she had one after another, meeting the same fate.

Perhaps it was harder for her to put aside her father's choice, or perhaps he was more determined than the others. At any rate, George Mason continued his visits.

Joseph, in his far-away home, knew of this, but his faith never grew less.

From letters to his mother Margaret only knew of his good health and good spirits.

Thus the months grew into years.

Then from the journals she learned of Joseph's rapidly growing popularity—of his advance to one and another position of greater importance.

Five years passed—oh, such long, weary years to the waiting hearts at home.

In answer to the oft-repeated cry "My boy, come to me!" he would write:

"Not yet can I come! Would to Heaven I might!"

Margaret alone understood this.

"Oh, why will he not come? I am almost dying to see my boy!" his mother said.

Margaret's heart echoed this cry, yet she would not send that one little word.

George Mason, at length, despairing of winning Margaret, had transferred his affections to her dearest friend, a beautiful little blonde, whose loving nature soon comforted him for any disappointment he might have suffered.

Eagerly Margaret watched the papers to know of Joseph's upward career.

But the suspense was too great for the anxious mother, so one day there came to Joseph the long-looked-for word from Lady Margaret.

"Come," she wrote, "your mother is ill. We cannot come to you."

Ah, did ever so few words bring so much joy and sorrow combined?

Weary with long watching in the sick-room Margaret stole out to wait for Joseph's coming.

"If in his eyes I find the same old look, the love of years shall find its own. Oh, my love shall have a joyful greeting," she said.

Watching, waiting, eager, she pressed her hand over her heart to still its wild beating.

"Oh, why does he not come? What can detain him?"

Wearily she sank back, her heart filled with fears.

Presently a murmur of hushed voices, slow, cautious steps, and the dreadful words, "dying or dead," reached her ear. Then she heard of a frightful collision, and when the door opened she sprang up with a cry of agony:

"Oh, my love! my love! you must not die!"

"Die? Why, you have been dreaming, my darling. No, dear love, I have just now begun to live," Joseph said, holding her closer to his heart, as he read in her eyes all the love for which he had waited and worked.

When Joseph had spent an hour, cheering and making well his mother, he coaxed Margaret away, whispering in her ear:

"My lady, do you know you have not said to me even one little word of love, save those from a terrible dream! Oh, my love is a proud little lady still," he said, playfully raising her face, more beautiful than ever, now dashed with joy.

He was more than satisfied when she placed her hand in his and said:

"Yes, I am prouder now than ever in life before, and my greatest pride shall always be to be worthy of your love, Josie."

F. H. B.

THE DRAMA.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

MR. TOM TAYLOR's new poetical drama entitled "Anne Boleyn," brought out at the Haymarket Theatre on Saturday evening, has much in common with the old chronicle plays of the Elizabethan period.

Act I. is dated November, 1524. It passes in the chamber of the queen's ladies at Hertford Castle, and simply sets forth Anne's love for Percy, and the breaking off of the match by the Earl of Northumberland and the Earl of Surrey, and finally by the king, whose passion is then declared. The scene of the second act is the garden of Haver Castle. The time is 1531, and Anne, just recovered from the sweating sickness, receives the visit of the king, now her avowed and passionate lover.

Act III. is dated three years later, and Anne is now queen, surrounded by her old friends and companions, and happy apparently in everything but in the secret plotting against her peace of her old enemies Surrey and Chapuis, the envoy of the emperor. Between this and the next act there is again an interval of two years, and it is in this fourth act the most stirring incidents of the play occur, which arise out of the queen's discovery of Henry's faithlessness with her maid Jane Seymour.

The fifth and last act passes in a room in the Tower, where, after the pretended accomplices of her guilt have passed through to execution, Anne herself takes farewell of Craumer and of the ladies of her court, and is seen on her way to the scaffold as the curtain falls. The play is rather crowded with personages important enough in history; but the interest, nevertheless, centres in Miss Neilson as Anne Boleyn, Mr. Harcourt as the King, and Miss Carlisle as Jane Seymour.

We understand that a new and original comedy, written by Mr. Henry P. Lytst, has been accepted by Mr. Henderson, and will be shortly produced at the Criterion Theatre.

At the Globe, the version of "La Timbale d'Argent," entitled "The Duke's Daughter," is being played, Madame Dolaro made her appearance in the character of Malvina, being her first this season in London.

THE Queen's Theatre will be opened by Mr. John Coleman in the early part of next summer, with a great spectacular Shakespearian revival. Arrangements are not definitely made, but the second part of "King Henry IV." is not unlikely to be decided upon.

Mr. TOOLE has appeared last week at the Gaiety in a one act domestic drama, entitled "Domestic Economy"—a production of the late Mr. Mark Lemon, long identified with Mr. Wright the comedian, who was the original representative of its leading character. This is an admirable little piece in its way, full of humour and truth, and sound both in its sentiment and in the moral which it teaches. Nor is Mr. Toole in the whole round of his impersonations more happy than in the part of John Grumley, which in his hands has been raised

from the level of farce to that of genuine comedy, though of a homely kind. The little play follows upon "Tottles," and, though humorous is different to the extravagant fun of that amusing piece.

AN English version of the French piece entitled "Le Gascon" was produced at the Olympic on the 21st ult. Mrs. Rousby sustaining in it the character of Mary Queen of Scots.—A dramatic version of "Bleak House" is in preparation at the Globe Theatre Mr. Burnand has written an extravaganza, entitled "On the Rink; or, the Girl He Left Behind Him," which will shortly take the place of "Black Eyed Susan" at the Duke's Theatre.

The large room of St. James's Hall was opened with a special programme of the Moore and Burgess Minstrels, on the occasion of the eleventh annual benefit of Mr. Frederick Burgess. There was a morning and an evening performance, with selections from Auber's "Domino Noir," Mendelssohn's "Lorely," Rossini's "William Tell," and "Cinderella," a "Hindustanee Dance," a popular comic sketch of a "A Tragedy Rehearsed," and a variety of new songs sung, with the usual admixture of pathos and comicality. Both performances were warmly received. An increase was made to the orchestra, which augmented the other attractions of the evening. The entertainment concluded with "A Song of the Times," written by Mr. C. Dunphie, and the old glee of "Strike the Lyre."

AMERICAN MYSTERIES.—A daughter of the late Professor Anderson, known to fame as the great "Wizard of the North," Miss Lizzie Anderson, is, assisted by two young ladies, Miss Lena Gwyn ("the Indescribable Phenomenon"), and Miss Ada Ross ("the marvellous Materializing Medium"), and Dr. H. L. Hume, a gentlemanly if not clever conjuror, who tries to imitate Dr. Lynn, giving an interesting and curious entertainment at the large Drawing-room, Argyle Place, Oxford Circus. Miss Anderson's tricks, though they can scarcely claim the merit of originality, are performed with elegant ease and commendable grace. The lady includes in her programme all the "startling effects" and "unfathomable phenomena" with which the Brothers Davenport, Mr. D. Home, Mrs. Guppy, the Misses Fox, Mrs. Fay, and other "spirit media" have tried to astonish the public. Perhaps the special feature is the assertion which Miss Anderson makes to the effect that she is prepared to show how these seemingly impossible feats have been accomplished.

The management of Covent Garden, anxious, it would seem, to do homage to Shakespeare, so far as that homage is compatible with the paramount claims of their Christmas pantomime, have produced a version of the "Merchant of Venice," which now occupies the first place in the programme, and is compressed for the occasion into two acts. The performance hardly calls for comment, though the acting of Mr. Rice in the part of Shylock is worth a note as a curious example of misdirected energy. Whether insulted by the merchant Antonio, baited by the rabble, robbed of his daughter, or denied his bond, the Covent Garden Shylock can "smile and smile." Still he fumes a good deal between whiles, and he can get into fits of passion, and shake his fists, or flourish his stick about the heads of his persecutors. Though all this exhibits the Jew as very malign and very angry, the result is not exactly impressive. The long-nourished sense of wrongs, the intense hatred of Shylock might certainly be represented by half the exertion, and yet with much more token of sincerity. If a deaf person skilled in the interpretation of gesture and expression of features did not mistake Mr. Rice in this character for the representative of a testy uncle threatening to disinherit a nephew if he did not instantly wed the odious young lady with the large fortune there would be nothing to thank but the Jewish gaberdine and the knife and scales.

DUSTS OF WOOD AND IVORY.—The dusts of some kinds of wood to which tanners of wood and fine cutters of wood are exposed, are causes of much irritation of the lungs and bronchial cough. The dust is fine and penetrating, and when it is from coloured wood it imparts its own peculiar colour to the bronchial secretion. I have seen these phenomena, markedly in the case of mahogany carvers, in those who carve ornaments for coaches and other articles of furniture. The work gives rise to a great quantity of wood dust, which is constantly inhaled. In carving the artisan has to keep up a blowing process with

the lips, in order to blow away the small portions of wood which he removes with the chisel. This process is very wearying, but the chief complaint made by the worker is of the dust he draws back in inhalation. The mischief is greatly increased in rooms where the ventilation is imperfect.—M.

FACETIE.

HAIR-DRESSING.

"How do you like hair done, uncle?"
"Well, dear, I must say I have a weakness for it jugged!"—Judy.

A SKETCH.

OLD LADY: "What on earth are you doing there? I have been looking at you for half an hour out of the window!"

ARTIST: "Taking a sketch of your cottage."

OLD LADY: "I want to know why you cannot take a seat inside. Why, child, you will catch your death-a-cold sitting on that damp stone! Come in, do!"

AN ARTFUL PARROT.

A very well-bred and exceedingly dignified young lady entered a florist's to make a purchase, when she was accosted as follows by a shrill voice resembling that of an aged lady:

"Shut the door! Don't you know any better? It's cold outside."

Very much overcome with mortification and embarrassment, she looked around to the speaker, saying:

"Pardon me, madam, for the wind blew so I could hardly close the door."

"Well, mind, miss, and don't do it again," repeated the voice, when, to her great astonishment and amusement, the young lady found that she had been conversing with a well-educated and very familiar polli-parrot.

Evidently annoyed at the bird for deceiving her so, the young lady turned her back to the cage and was intent upon examining some flowers.

Suddenly the same voice, or what seemed to be, said to her:

"What can I do for you, miss?"

"If you hold your tongue I shall be gratified above all things," replied the young miss, turning around as she spoke, and discovering the lady proprietor standing in her presence.

WANTED TO SHAVE.

While undergoing a tonsorial operation in a fine saloon, a few evenings since, a jolly unsophisticated youth pops in,

"Want a shave, sir?"

"Take a seat, sir?"

"Cut your hair, sir?"

"Your turn next, sir."

"Shave, or your hair cut?"

Were the volleys that received the young gentleman from the country.

"How much do you tax a feller for taking off his hair?"

"Sixpence, sir, only sixpence."

"An' how much for choppin' off one's hair?"

"Two shillings, sir—two shillings!"

"What? two shillings?"

"Yes, sir, that's all."

"Two shillings! Why, I never cut over sixpence in my born days, to have my hair chopped and frizzled up, with a barbare shave in the bargain!"

"Oh! but dear sir, we're artists, we are, and do it up a little browner than they do in the country!"

"Well, praps you kin, but I'll be durne if I gin more'n a sixpence, no how. Do it? Don't, eh?"

"Well, then, you ain't goin' to have my custom!"

And off went the rural gent.

THE FINEST OF THE WRECK.

Chapter I.—Stephan Don Raffellino de Rustibloati was a corsair, with a high, pale brow, curly hair, and a compact, well-knit form; and he paced the deck of the vessel—the Lord High Chief of Barnegat. He was the scourge of the seas, and so was his noble craft.

Chap. II.—A storm arose. The ocean from her deep caverns threw to the sky her rolling waves; the thunder flashed, the lightning roared, and the wind whistled Yankee Doodle through the vessel's cordage.

Chap. III.—Yet Don Raffellino was not afraid, for his brandy bottle was full. With a loud voice he cried, "Man at the top of the mast, ahoy!"

Chap. IV.—The man at the top of the mast, a huge, burly seaman, answered, "Hello! what's up?"

Chap. V.—"Anything in sight?" said Don Raffellino.

Chap. VI.—"Yes, sir—me!" yelled the burly sailor.

Chap. VII.—Runs into the eighth.

Chap. VIII.—"What is it—Spanish or English?"

Chap. IX.—"Neither; it's a spermacy whale, lard on the lee bow."

Chap. X.—A feeling of compassion thrilled through the terrible bosom of the hardened pirate, and, with a subdued voice, he spoke to the pilot, "Eilat, ahoy!"

"Ahoy, yourself!" cried the bluff pilot.

"Which way are you steering?"

"Nor' by nor'-sou-west, a little easterly by weak."

"Good! keep her close that tack, but don't run over that spermacy whale."

The command came too late. A tremendous shock threw the ill-fated pirate off his feet, and shattered the vessel into seventeen hundred and ninety-seven thousand eight hundred and sixty-two pieces, besides injuring the bowsprit, and demolishing the neck of a Cologne bottle.

Chap. XI.—The Barnegat pirate was no more, but his bones were afterwards found upon a flight of cellar steps, which was floating in the Polar Seas.

CHAP. XII.—

"Adeline Maria Jane Tomkins, I am your father!"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, don't you ever speak to that fellow Jones again, as long as you live."

A LADY put her watch under her pillow the other night, but couldn't keep it there, because it disturbed her sleep. And there all the time was her bed-ticking right underneath her, and she never thought of that at all.

In one block in the western part of Detroit there are eight ladies who won't go to church on Sunday, because a ninth lady has an India shawl, and they haven't. And the lady who has it won't go because there is no chance for her to show off the shawl before the eight, whose feelings she well understands.

MR. BUDD asked her, "Rose, will you be mine?" Rose answered: "I'm sorry it cannot be, but a rose cannot be turned into a bud."

"Isn't your husband a little bald?" asked one lady of another, the other day. "There isn't a bald hair in his head," was the hasty reply of the wife.

A LADY whose worse half was notorious for his ill temper said she had the most even-tempered husband in the world. "Why, how is that?" exclaimed one of her friends. "Why, you see, he is always mad," was the satisfactory reply.

A FATAL CASE.

Old Polly Smith was a terrible plain woman. She would have borne off all the compositors, and given them the odds of fifty start in the race.

She was endlessly complaining of her ailments of various kinds, was Mrs. Smith; to the no small annoyance of such listeners as she claimed to hold, as did the ancient mariner, the wedding guest, by the spell of her "glittering eye," and no one was more annoyed than old Dr. Bikes, a cynical old fellow of her neighbourhood.

Missing Mrs. Smith one morning, he ventured to salute her with the usual compliment of the morning with the accustomed, "How d'ye do?" Fatal mistake!

"Why, doctor, feel putty miserable, thank'ee. My old complaint is trouble'n me. There never was a poor creature that suffered more than I do. Pains and ache and aches and pains all the time."

"But," interrupted the doctor, growing impatient, "you don't look very sick."

"No," replied she, "I know I don't, I feel a great deal worse than I look."

"Good Heavens!" cried the doctor, throwing up his hands, "then you'd better make haste home, for you can't live an hour!"

Mrs. Smith had the good sense to know what he meant, and never made any more complaints to him.

PARLIAMENTARY.

We understand that the following bills will be introduced during the present Session:

A bill to make Walker's Dictionary illegal at spelling bees.

A bill to close the Marble Arch at six o'clock every evening.

A bill to make rinking compulsory between the ages of sixteen and sixty.

A bill to abolish chimney-pot hats.

A bill to regulate the price of old china tapers.

A bill to legalize the flogging of their fares by drunken cabmen.

A bill to place the Stock Exchange under police supervision.

A bill to make the use of the word reverend as applied to Her Majesty's subjects a misdemeanour.

A bill to raze the Albert Hall to the ground.—Fun.

AN ART PUPIL.—The "Times," commenting on a recent theatrical production, singles out one actor from among an exceptionally large company, and "unhesitatingly assigns the palm" to him. As the part is that of a Spanish nobleman, we are rather

astonished to find a few lines farther on that the praise is given him because "he is a most excellent Frenchman." The dramatic critic of the "leading journal" is now to his office—all the more praise is due to him for so soon and an successfully mastering the "weathercock policy" which has made fame and fortune for both paper and proprietors in Printing-house Square. Truly, there must be something in the doctrine of hereditary ability, despite its opponents.—*Fun.*

A BURNING QUESTION.

Mr. Burns has urged upon the Government his scheme of training ships. Burns and training ships have recently been brought into such close connection that they should know a good deal about each other. Ask the boys.—*Fun.*

THE BILL OF THE PLAY.—Bill Shakespeare.—*Fun.*

THE MOMENTOUS QUESTION.

AUGUSTUS: "Now, Emily, do you love me, or do you not?"

EMILY: "Well, if I say I don't, shall I have to return your presents?"—*Fun.*

CONSCIENTIOUS.

CONSERVATIVE M.P. (to Butler, who has given warning): "What have you to complain of?"

BUTLER: "Oh, nothing in the house, sir—last night, not in this house, sir. But I'm afraid, from 'er Majesty's speech, as the Conservatives don't mean to hact up to their programme!"—*Fun.*

STERN TRUTHS.

Dear Mr. Punch—

Not having had an opportunity of myself laying my views before the Prime Minister the other day, I send you a brief note of what I intended to have said on behalf of myself and brother ship-owners.

In the first place, what right has a fellow like Plimsoll to interfere with me? I wish he'd give me provocation to pull his nose, or smash his spectacles. I've actually had four out of five ships detained in consequence of his impertinent meddling. Because one-fourth of a crew of sixteen object to be drowned, are they to prevent twelve other honest and daring fellows from risking their lives, as British seamen ought always to be ready to do at the call of duty? It is perfectly monstrous!

It is true that one or two of my ships have occasionally sailed rather deep in the water, and that one did go down not long after leaving port. But in this case it was solely because the captain had foolishly forgotten to allow for the weight of the crew, who had shipped at the last moment—the carpenter and boatswain being exceptionally heavy men.

Then, as for saying that seamen are, as a rule, dissatisfied with their ships, it is all moonshine. The sailor's attachment to his ship is, on the contrary, proverbial. Why, it was only the other day a man fell overboard from one of my own ships. Did he swim away from it? No, he immediately endeavoured to climb on board again, and expressed the highest satisfaction when he found himself once more among his messmates. Instances of this kind are numerous.

With regard to want of proper comfort and accommodation, all I can say is that I don't believe there is a single bank in all my vessels in which the stoutest sailor could not turn without coming in contact with the top planking. What do you say to that, Mr. Punch?

There are only two more points upon which I need trouble you, and they are so insignificant that I must apologise for mentioning them.

The frequency of casualties has been much spouted about by Plimsoll and Co. I simply remark, "Pooh!" Do not accidents happen on land? Did not my own daughter tread on a piece of orange peel the other day, and twisted her foot, so that she could not skate for a week? And as to the case, lately much commented on by a scandal loving press, in which one of my ships came into port with eighteen out of twenty disabled by scurvy, if you only knew the trouble a captain has to get his men to take the slightest precautions, and their rooted prejudices against lime juice and other antiscorbutics, you would, I am sure, agree with me that the owner is the last person to be made responsible for what is, after all, only a form of disease, and mysterious, like all diseases.

Scurvy is, no doubt, an unpleasant complaint; so is the gout: I've got a touch of it myself now. So you see, Mr. Punch, there is not the slightest occasion for all this agitation; and all I can say is, that if I am to be interfered with in my business, it will end in my being unable to clear a living profit, and costing the concern altogether, at whatever cost to the country. I have only expressed in this letter what I know to be the private views of others of my class.

If you want to see what a jolly, contented dog the

British seaman really is, come and spend a week aboard my yacht, and believe me to be,

Yours, indignantly,
A SHIPOWNER.

—Punch.

NAVAL INTELLIGENCE.

The Admiralty have under consideration, a scheme for saving half a ton of pickled pork. If successful, they are confident this will atone for past misfortune.

It has been decided to raise the "Vanguard" by leaving her where she is, as it is anticipated she may come up herself a bit at a time, thus avoiding heavy expense to the country.

The Duke of Edinburgh will have command of an ironclad shortly. Tarleton and Leiningen are to be kept on shore during his cruise, for fear of accidents.

The Circular ironclads are to be employed solely in the Fugitive Slave trade.—*Fun.*

NEW READING.—An outlier at Hammersmith has been brought to grief judicial for biting his master's thumb. Rash outlier, why wert thou not content with biting thine own thumb? Why try to improve on the Bard? New readings are successful sometimes, but thumbtunes not.—*Fun.*

THE SNOWFLAKE.

Little evanescent thing!

Flitting on thy jewelled wing,

Soon to press the plain so drear,

And dissolve into a tear;

Yet I will not weep for thee,

Brighter is thy destiny.

Though the frost may on the plain,

Hold thee with his icy chain,

Spring will come with sunny glee,

To unlock and set thee free.

Mounting up on wings of air,

Where the forked lightnings glare;

Riding in the thunder's car,

O'er the spiny lands afar;

Breathing in the leaves of flowers,

Sparkling in the summer showers,

Glowing in the vernal bow,

Leaping with the streamlet's flow,

Mingling in the ocean waves,

Swimming in the peasant's bowl,

Nectar to the thirsty soul—

Thus a merry round thou'lt go—

Back again—a flake of snow!

Such is changing life to me—

Now in sorrow, now in glee;

Sometimes shedding burning tears,

Mounting now above all fears;

Soaring upwards to the skies,

Prostrate at the flowerer lies;

Doomed to sleep within the grave,

Where the grass will wildly wave;

Yet as deathless still, I know,

As the changing flake of snow!

GEMS.

It is only our mental duration that we measure by visible and measurable objects; and there is nothing mournful in the contemplation for one who knows that the Creator made him to be the image of his own eternity, and who feels that in the desire for immortality he has one proof of his capacity for it.

The keenest abuse of our enemies will not hurt us so much, in the estimation of discerning, as the injudicious praise of our friends.

Be avaricious of time; do not give any moment without receiving its value; only allow the hours to go from you with as much regret as you give to your gold; do not allow a single day to pass without increasing the treasure of your knowledge and virtue. The use of time is a debt we contract from birth, and it should only be paid with the interest that our life has accumulated.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

QUINN PUDDING.—One quart milk, one pint (hardly full) bread crumbs, four eggs—yolks, whites for frosting, sugar to taste; serve with hard sauce and jelly; when the pudding is done pour over it the whites of eggs and brown.

A REMEDY FOR RHEUMATISM.—This is a most excellent for inflammatory rheumatism—it is a charity to print it. Four ounces saltpetre in one pint of alcohol; wetting red flannel with it, lay it on,

It takes away the redness, reduces the swelling and relieves the torment and agony.

SUGAR CAKES.—Take half a pound of butter, half a pound of sugar, one pound of flour, three eggs, milk enough to form a dough. Beat the butter and sugar together; whisk the eggs light, and add them; then stir in the milk and flour alternately, so as to form a dough. Roll it out, cut it into cakes, and bake in a moderate oven.

GINGERBREAD-NUTS.—Dissolve a quarter of a pound of butter in three-quarters of a pound of treacle, put it into a pan large enough to hold the rest of the ingredients, and when almost cold stir in one pound of dried and sifted flour, half a pound of coarse brown sugar, three-quarters of an ounce of ground ginger, and the peel of a lemon, grated; mix all these well together, and let it remain till the following day, then divide it into pieces the size of a nut, and bake them on buttered tins in a quick oven.

COLLAGE PUDDING.—Take eight ounces of bread-crumbs, eight ounces of suet, eight ounces of curvants, one ounce of citron-peel, one ounce of orange-peel, a little sugar and nutmeg, three eggs, beaten yolks and whites separately, and a glass of brandy. Mix well, and shape them into balls; rub them over with egg, and roll them in flour. Fry a nice brown in boiling butter or lard, and drain them on blotting-paper. Or they may be put into small moulds and baked in the oven. In either case serve with wine or brandy sauce.

STATISTICS.

GREAT TOWNS.—The Registrar-General estimates that in the middle of this present year, 1876, the population of London—that is to say, the Metropolitan Registration District—will reach 3,489,428; and that Glasgow will then have 545,144 inhabitants; Liverpool, 521,844; Manchester, 537,917; and Salford, 188,425; Birmingham, 371,839; Dublin, 314,666; Leeds, 291,580; Sheffield, 274,914; Edinburgh, 215,146; Bristol, 199,539; Bradford, 173,723; Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 139,929; Hull, 136,933; Portsmouth, 124,867; Leicester, 113,381; Sunderland, 108,343; Brighton, 100,632; Nottingham, 98,627; Oldham, 88,609; Norwich, 83,430; Wolverhampton, 72,549; Plymouth, 72,280. The Registrar-General states the population of the three Presidency cities of British India thus:—Calcutta, 447,000; Bombay, 644,405; Madras, 397,552. The Registrar-General's list, which is gradually lengthening, but is limited to towns supplying him with returns of health and mortality week by week, comprises also a dozen foreign cities, and he states their population as follows:—Paris, 1,251,722; New York, 1,046,000; Berlin, 980,000; Philadelphia, 800,000; Vienna, 676,791; Naples, 451,000; Brooklyn, 450,000; Hamburg (State), 370,000; Buda-Pesth, 300,000; Amsterdam, 286,932; Rome, 256,153; Breslau, 225,000; Turin, 217,806; Alexandria, 212,034; Copenhagen, 199,000; Brussels, 188,264; Munich, 186,000; Florence, 176,000; Rotterdam, 129,239; the Hague, 97,565; Christiania, 75,000. It must not be supposed that this enumeration of great cities is exhaustive or complete.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It has been decided to commence the Channel tunnel at St. Margaret's near Dover, next April, by opening a trial cutting. Before the grand shaft can be sunk further Parliamentary powers will have to be obtained.

A sum of about 3,000 guineas has been presented to the well-known Swedish explorer, Professor Nordenskiöld, by a Russian merchant, M. Sibiriakoff towards the expenses of his next exploring trip to the Arctic regions.

A MAGNIFICENT cameo, supposed to be the portrait of Octavia, the second wife of Mark Antony, and the sister of Augustus, has been brought to notice of the Paris Académie des Inscriptions. The stone is a sardonyx, with a milky surface, the interior being of a reddish black, and the workmanship of the cameo is exquisitely delicate. The face is evidently a portrait, and the head resembles that of the Venus of Milo.

The promised increase of pensions to the non-commissioned ranks of the army is expected to take the shape of an additional 6d. per day "all round." At present a private on leaving the army is granted per day a pension of 8d., and 5d. additional for five good-conduct badges; a corporal adds 1d. a day for every year of service, a sergeant, 1d., and a sergeant-major, 2d. With the additional 6d., if allowed, a private may obtain a maximum pension of 1s. 7d.; a sergeant, 2s. 6d.; and a sergeant-major, 3s.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.—A minor cannot be compelled to pay damages for a breach of promise of marriage.

CORA ST. CROIX.—The circumstances you mention do not alter the validity of the marriage, but renders the party or parties thereto liable to a criminal prosecution.

CURIO.—The man who cannot find a wife in his own neighbourhood and sphere of life, ought not rationally to expect one from any other direction.

S. A. W.—Kissing began with the creation. In the Scriptures the custom has a significance far removed from the sensual.

ESQUIRE.—A young woman of twenty-four, who suffers with weak eyes, and who has never had her ears pierced, would probably derive much benefit from having them pierced now.

FAIRY.—In answer to your inquiry we recommend you to apply to Cramer's Musical Library, Regent Street, there you will be well satisfied with their selection of music, and also with the terms of purchase of their instruments.

AN INQUIRER.—When the Hindoo priest is about to baptize an infant he utters the following beautiful sentiment: "Little babe, thou enterest the world weeping, while all around thee smile. Conceive to live, that you may depart in smiles while all around you weep."

W. B. P.—Send the boy to sea. If anything will reform him, that will. In the meantime, keep him down with a firm hand, but don't be too harsh. Mingle parental kindness with parental authority, sternly exercised.

A CORRESPONDENT.—When a lady and gentleman are walking together, the latter should give the former the wall or the inside of the path. The same rule applies to a married couple, because it is simply the rule of politeness, and a husband should be polite to his wife.

J. H.—All French dresses now sit closely to the outlines of the figure without compressing it. If you wish to know how your wife will look in one, take the lady in her night-gown and hold her under the shower-bath. The garment will sit very closely indeed, and what she will complain of will certainly not be compression.

AUCIA.—Young ladies should be circumspect, and not allow themselves to be drawn into a correspondence with gentlemen with whom they are but slightly acquainted. Your mother would be the proper person to reply to the letter you have received.

FANNY.—A young lady ought not to set herself pointedly to work to win a young gentleman's affections. She must not let him see that he has made any impression upon her heart. If he really likes her he will soon let her know it; but if not, she cannot force him to love her.

LA VALIERE.—A person who is naturally inclined to be abstemious cannot prevent the tendency altogether, but may somewhat check or mitigate it by taking plenty of exercise and by observing a great simplicity of diet. Malt liquor should never be taken; sugar and butter should be used very moderately indeed; green vegetables and salads are to be recommended.

F. M.—You will never be happy, and, we may say, good, until you learn to make the best of everything. At home, if wife or husband is cross, if servants are careless, if children are irritable, do not fly into a passion, for that will do no good; but make the best of circumstances, fulfil your duty, and wait for happier times. Abroad, if things look unpromising, preserve a stout heart, keep cool, and play your hand to the best of your ability.

KATE.—The number of times a gentleman has seen a lady cannot regulate the right or wrong of his receiving letters from her. It depends upon the counts. He is not jealous or suspicious. Have a higher opinion of the person to whom you are engaged than to suppose him capable of doing what is mean and trickish, or abandon him as unworthy of you. There should be the most perfect confidence between those about to become man and wife.

AMIO.—"Wishing for a little information, I come to you as others have done and are still doing. When going to church with a gentleman, an attendant meets us at the door to give us seats. Should the lady follow the attendant first, then the gentleman, or vice versa?" Let the lady precede the gentleman and follow the attendant. She will then naturally, and without the gentleman stumbling on the attendant, be able to take her seat in the pew, followed by her escort.

LILLIAN AND FLOSA.—"We are two young ladies verging on the age of eighteen. We are still at boarding-school, very much against our wills. We are debarr'd from gentlemen's society altogether. We have yet no thought of marriage, but we think it not altogether right to be entirely deprived of company. Now, please, give us your valuable opinion." Company will come in due

time. Devote yourselves, contentedly, to your studies at present.

MILES.—It is the custom of the Chinese to shave all the head except a lock of hair on the crown, which is allowed to grow to a great length, and which is artificially lengthened with silk artistically joined to the hair. This custom became proscribed on the occasion of the ascendancy of the Tartars. Indeed, the shaving of the head all but the scalp-lock was made an imperative imperial edict, and was only submitted to on the part of the Chinese after great opposition, during which many lost their heads to save their hair. Prior to this the Chinese had been remarkable for their long, silky, flowing locks, and were called the "black-hair people" by their neighbours.

S. S. S.—Where a lover, without having the frankness to assign a valid reason, breaks off the acquaintance, the girl must be guided by the peculiar nature of her engagement with him. In the event of there being studied insult, she should place herself under the protection of her friends; but where there is only a respectful coldness, it is her best course to be patient and await the result, which in nine cases out of ten is not long postponed. All these things have a meaning. As to presents, we object to the practice of returning them, for the party desisting off does not deserve the compliment. A girl should retain all she can get—the men do—and if S. S. S. follows our advice, we hope she has got something worth keeping.

LORELEIGH.—"Do you think it gentlemanly or ladylike for any one to laugh at almost everything that is said? What are you to do? Are you to sit and listen and be insulted and think they are laughing at you, or leave the room?" Some persons are witty and cannot speak without being funny. Some have a reputation for wit, and persons suppose everything they say to be funny, and feel bound to laugh. And, finally, some are not only witty, but they are the cause of wit in other men, as, if we remember rightly, Sir John Falstaff described himself. Now in this last case no rule can be laid down. The course to be pursued must be left to the discretion of the party. True, there is often a plentiful lack of discretion in such persons. It is said, however, to say, that the best thing to do with such rude persons is not to do or say anything laughable, or rather—for one ought to be accurate—laugh-at-able.

THROUGH EYEGLASS SHUT.

After all the night's sore darkness
Folded o'er the closed eye,
Comes the welcome ruddy glimmer
Of the daylight drawing nigh;
Then the eyelids' satin curtain
Need not open wide and fair,
To discover coming morning
With its sunny presence fair.

For the piercing golden lance
Through the purple-tinted veil,
Tells of glowing summer sunbeams
Kissing hill-side, ridge and vale.
Knew we then, thus, a night better
It were joy enough to know
When the night puts on her vesture,
When she lays her shadow low.

But the blessed open vision!
With the purple curtain drawn;
When the shining iris watches
All the mystery of dawn.
From its early pallid glimmer
On the softly stirring leaves,
Till the sun upon his shoulders
Bears aloft his golden sheaves.

So shall we awake some morning
With the eyes enshrouded here
Open wide to see the glory
Of that better sunshine clear.
There, our present open vision
Will but stupid groping seem,
And these earthly pictures only
Fragments of a weary dream.

E. L.

EMILY AND MINNIE. Two friends, would like to correspond with two young men, tradesmen preferred. Emily is fair and of a loving disposition. Minnie is twenty-one, dark and domesticated; both are considered good looking.

W. K. and J. A. Both, wish to correspond with two young ladies. W. K. is twenty, tall and rather good looking; J. A. is twenty-two and rather good looking; respondents must be tall and good looking.

G. E. G. Twenty-one, medium height, good connections and in a good line of business, would like to correspond with a dark young lady about nineteen, of good education and manners, a little money preferred, though not absolutely necessary.

EMILY. Seventeen, medium height, auburn hair, gray eyes, considered good looking, wishes to correspond with a dark young man; a tradesman preferred.

POLLY. Nineteen, medium height, dark hair, brown eyes, wishes to correspond with a young man; a tradesman preferred.

MAGGIE and JULIE. Twenty-four and twenty-two, medium height, well educated, musical and of loving dispositions, wish to correspond with two steady young men.

MINNIE. Medium height, dark, considered good looking, would like to correspond with a young man about eighteen.

CLARENCE. Eighteen, dark hair and eyes, considered good looking, medium height, of a loving disposition, a photographer by profession, wishes to correspond with a young lady about seventeen; respondent must be dark.

ANNIE and EMILY. Would like to correspond with two young gentlemen, clerks preferred. Annie is twenty, rather tall, blue eyes, fond of home and of a loving disposition. Emily is twenty-one, medium height, very good looking, dark hair, brown eyes and thoroughly domesticated.

EMMA. Twenty, tall, light hair, blue eyes, considered good looking, domesticated and loving, and will have some money at a future day, wishes to correspond

with a young gentleman, tall, good looking and fond of home.

ELLEN. Twenty, rather tall, good looking, respectable, domesticated and of an amiable and lively disposition, wishes to correspond with a tall, respectable young man under thirty; one in business preferred.

SARAVANOA BIRD. Twenty-three, rather tall, considered handsome by his shipmates and holds a good position in the Navy as senior captain of the dog watch, wishes to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

SWORD and BAYONET. Two sergeants, both holding responsible positions in one of Her Majesty's regiments of Foot Guards, wish to correspond with two respectable young ladies about twenty with a view to matrimony. Sword is twenty-one, tall, light brown hair, blue eyes, Bayonet is twenty-six, rather tall and dark; both are considered handsome and of loving and cheerful disposition.

HALLA. Twenty-eight, medium height, dark hair and would like to correspond with a widower with a view to matrimony.

G. M. Eighteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, cheerful, domesticated and fond of home, wishes to correspond with a young man, who is affectionate and fond of home.

B. S. Seventeen, medium height, fair complexion, good looking, wishes to correspond with a dark young man; respondent must be good looking, good tempered and fond of home.

ARLIS. Nineteen, medium height, dark, pretty and well educated, wishes to correspond with a fair young gentleman.

ALICE. Twenty-one, medium height, fresh complexion, dark eyes and hair, of a cheerful disposition, well educated, and very fond of housekeeping, wishes to correspond with a steady young man of a cheerful, happy temper.

JOHN L. A colour-sergeant in the Royal Marines, who will soon be in receipt of a good pension, would like to correspond with a lady about twenty or thirty, with a view to matrimony; a widow with a little money preferred.

HENRIETTA. Seventeen, fair, blue eyes, considered good looking, musical, amiable, and agreeable, of good family and connections, would like to correspond with a nice looking gentleman with a view to matrimony; respondent must be from twenty to twenty-four, of refined manners, intelligent, gentlemanly, and of good family and position.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

ROYAL FURNEL HARRY is responded to by—Jennie, twenty-four.

LOVING LILY by—Hattie, tall, dark gray eyes, good appearance, in a good mercantile situation and has first-class prospects.

E. G. J. and H. B. by—Lily and Violet, two friends. Lily is twenty-one, tall, dark, good looking and an orphan. Violet is nineteen, fair, medium height and considered good looking; they both possess money of their own.

NORA and BLANCH by—Long Sam and Short Jack, both are in good situations. Long Sam is twenty-one, tall, fair complexion, and prefers Blanch. Short Jack is twenty, medium height, fair, and prefers Nora.

JOSUAH by—Ellie, twenty-one, tall, good personal appearance, affectionate, amiable, and would make a loving wife.

MARY by—C. F. M., nineteen, a tradesman in business and will have some property when of age.

ARTHUR and CHARLEY by—Emma and Flo, who think they are all required.

T. A. G. and T. A. by—Emily and Maria. Emily is twenty-two, tall, dark hair and eyes, and has 40s. a year. Maria is fair, light blue eyes, considered very pretty, has been well brought up, can sing and play the piano.

POOR EMILY by—Happy Jack, twenty, dark, and all she requires; by—R. F., twenty, dark curly hair, of a loving disposition, and thinks that he is all she requires; and by—Frank, nineteen, dark, considered good looking and amiable, and is a good situation.

LIVING LILY by—R. S., a gentleman, twenty-five, in a good position, good looking, well educated, and thinks he is all she requires.

TOMMY by—Arabella, seventeen, tall, rather pretty, amiable, loving and thoroughly domesticated and good tempered.

SAM by—Kate S. eighteen, medium height, brown hair, fair complexion, domesticated, loving and fond of home.

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